

THE ROUND TABLE.

A SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE, SOCIETY, AND ART.

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OUR FIVE TALENTS.

THE grandeur of the national prospects is a subject on which all classes of Americans are fond to dwell. It is pleasant to reflect that so far as material advantages are concerned we are truly in a manner a chosen people. The geographical dimensions of the United States could not, indeed, form a topic for former debate, since they were susceptible of demonstration; and, however apparently imperiled by the late war, their present and future compass may be assumed as incontestable. The extent of our coast line, the size and navigability of our streams, the vast internal area of our territory, are fixed facts of which it is scarcely too much to say that we can be deprived of them by no human power. But it is not alone in miles of shore or leagues of soil that the most fruitful sources of our future development are now believed to rest. The prodigious vigor, endurance, and pluck of the people have been exhibited in so striking a light by the events of the last five years, that even the coolest among friends, the most hypercritical among censors, have fairly broken down under the weight of accumulated evidence, and have accorded the more or less willing or grudging tribute of their admiration. We now know that we can produce, upon occasion, an army second to none in the world for numbers, for hardihood, and for brilliant fighting qualities. We now know that we possess a navy probably at this moment superior to any other in sheer force if not in the numbers of ships and men, and capable of expansion, when called for, to a limit equal to coping with any probable alliance of foes. We now know that the national debt, great as it is, can be carried with security and comparative ease; and that if not cleared off in twenty years, as was that accumulated at the close of the war in 1814, it will not be because of incapacity, but for reasons of policy. We know that we are receiving a current of immigration whose quality as well as quantity surpasses those of former years, and which promises, notwithstanding the losses of the war, to swell our natural increase by the close of the century to that hundred millions predicted so long ago by Elkanah Watson, whose other prophecies respecting American development have been so singularly fulfilled. Materially speaking, there are no bounds to the possibilities of our future. Morally speaking, we have at least made great strides in important essentials towards conquering the respect of mankind. And if, aesthetically speaking, we may not in candor put forth such sounding claims, the national youth, outrun by the national virility, if it does not supply an excuse for sloth, certainly furnishes a valid one for comparatively limited achievement.

But the question arises, after this enumeration of blessings and prospective capacities—this catalogue of the talents with which we have been intrusted—the question which no American of true patriotism, of average morality, or of ordinary intelligence can or ought to shirk, and which is, What are we to do with all these things? Are we to bury them in the earth or to hide them away in a napkin, so that when the time for account has arrived we shall have nothing to return to the Giver for the use thereof? Are we to content ourselves with heaping together brown-stone houses and rich furniture, and take no heed of the social and artistic culture which should bring grace and meaning and soul thereto? Are our rich men to pile up enormous fortunes for the mere sake of selfish acquisition, using capital to beget capital which they have no idea how to spend when got, doing no good but rather harm to the community, since they draw from it and exhaust its substance, rendering it only in return a mean and corrupting example? Are our publicists—editors, politicians, and sometimes, even to their shame, our preachers—to continue in their old, miserable ruts, doing all things and omitting all things with the never-lost-sight-of view to their own personal emolument and ambition? Are our young men and maidens to be brought up always with the inflexible dogma burned into their souls that they must live to

make and marry fortunes, and for that alone? It is indisputable that such evils as these exist in other countries, and that to cite them in a carping spirit is to suggest a suspicion of prejudice or injustice. But educated people very well know, without an elaborate rehearsal of proofs, how, from the absence of some things and the presence of others, our country is peculiarly liable to an exceptional growth of these evils, and in greater danger, therefore, of being permanently injured by them than are many others. Besides, and this is the important point we would inculcate, they have but their two talents, their one talent, while we have five; and are not our responsibilities greater, therefore, than theirs?

We would crave of all—well knowing that there are many kindly well-wishers among the number—who may sometimes think that the assaults on social or other defects of the community which appear in these columns are too sweeping or aggressive in their character, to remember that an earnest appreciation of the reply to this question underlies the plan and the policy of this paper. We dearly love our magnificent country and would see it all it should be; but it cannot contribute to its wholesome condition or to its healthful advancement to ignore or suppress the truth about its present defects. Neither is it any just defense for boasting or exaggeration that a few foreigners, with limited minds and ungenerous desires, should have sometimes belied or misrepresented us. The country is strong enough by this time physically, and we hope morally, to bear the telling of the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth; and as we see and believe it so it is our purpose to tell it now and hereafter. That there are especial advantages about such a scheme it is not difficult to perceive. The one which springs from its non-partisan character is sufficiently obvious. Partisans can see the faults of their opponents—although generally through a colored glass—but they cannot see their own. We hope to gauge the virtues and faults of both, and to give each his deserts. Papers controlled by politicians and demagogues must needs at the present time flatter the multitude—their hopes of prosperity depend upon it. We are unconstrained in such a direction even by selfish considerations, since the class to which we mainly appeal would find nothing to admire in our pursuing it, but, on the contrary, a great deal to condemn.

But even assuming our circle of readers to be of a more comprehensive, that is to say, of a more popular, character, we gravely doubt whether in the long run the policy of honesty will not prove to be the best one. It seems certain that as the standards of education are raised and its facilities disseminated, the people at large must learn to see through the hollowiness, the selfishness, the intense hypocrisy of the politicians in all sections who have done so much for themselves and so little for the land that bore them. Truly may it be said in relation to the late horrible struggle that the politicians brought the country to the imminent edge of destruction, and the people saved it. The people, becoming more and more educated and knowing their strength, will not always be led tenderly by the nose as asses are. The greater with substantially noble instincts will not always be dominated by the less with superlatively mean ones; and the petty arts whereby the latter have maintained their bad supremacy will, we may hope, be seen through, appreciated, and ultimately punished. This view may possibly be too sanguine a one; but it is perfectly certain that if the principle of manhood suffrage is to prosper as a permanent institution among us, it can only be through just such a view being realized. If the community continues to grow like a giant materially and like a pigmy politically, the disparity will sooner or later bring consequences which thinkers have not forgotten to presage. To endeavor in a measure to avert or forestall those consequences is one of our principal objects, and a knowledge of this fact may sometimes assist in explaining a course which may otherwise appear eccentric. To quicken as far as possible the general sense of responsibility which ought to attach to the enjoyment of our stupendous national blessings—to castigate with unsparing hand the vices and follies which blur and stultify such a sense—are indicated as among the most salutary processes for the

ends we propose. We desire to see the nation awakened to the full meaning of its mission among mankind—of the comprehensive scope—the duties to politics, to society, to letters, and to art—which are involved in its magnificent future; and we desire to see it realize speedily and to realize thoroughly the solemn truth that unto whomsoever much is given much also from him will be required.

NONSENSE ABOUT THE CABLE.

SOME silly people, misled no doubt by the frivolous buncombe of daily newspapers, seem to imagine that the whole machinery of nature and art is to be turned upside down because the great wire continues to talk clearly to us from Valentia. This is an illusion whereof it were well that the popular mind should be disabused. The sun will continue to give us light by day and the moon by night; the politicians will continue to blackguard each other and the good-natured public to look on and smile; the President will continue to be a cherub with some and a devil with others; the ladies, dear creatures, will continue to ruin their spouses in finery and to show us their pretty ankles in Broadway; the men will continue to grumble and drink and chew and curse and make money; all these things will go on as heretofore undisturbed by the irrelevant fact, however otherwise momentous, that the monster cable preserves its intelligent power and is still a living thing throughout those still, solemn, eternal wastes from Dingle Bay to Newfoundland.

Undoubtedly the success of the cable is an excellent thing for trade, and if the old one, which has been so long lying on its ocean bed inert and disconsolate, can be under-run, fished up, and made to work, as is hoped, the two first desiderata having been accomplished last Sunday, we can begin to count upon the permanent efficiency of the communication with considerable confidence. The processes of business will be simplified and balanced, the chances for hazardous vicissitude greatly diminished, and substantial benefits will thus be conferred upon the community. The misconceptions we speak of do not, of course, refer to these obvious advantages which all can readily perceive and understand; such are patent enough, and their possible fruits can hardly be over-stated. Our reference is to the current delusions respecting news; news, that is to say, of a general and not a special interest. It is perhaps serviceable to the daily press to disseminate an idea that their columns, with the aid of the cable, are henceforth and regularly to become vastly more interesting than they ever yet have been; and it certainly is not surprising that the public should be comforted by such an idea. But what, in soberness, is likely to be the genuine state of the case? Merely this: that we shall receive daily what once we received, let us say, once in ten days. In other words, the day's intelligence will only be one-tenth in quantity of what we formerly got on the steamer's arrival, and of course, other things being equal, the news will be only one-tenth as interesting. The world at large does not propose materially to change its habits of life, its accustomed routine, its habitual variety of ebb and flow, of accident and vicissitude, merely because the continents are connected by a telegraphic wire. Germans or Frenchmen will not fight daily battles only to afford us the gratification of startling and bloody intelligence to regale our breakfast tables withal. Neither will men in London risk the rôle of Guy Fawkes every morning for the delectation of the patrons of Mr. Bennett. The news comes to us, in truth, with a thinning and diluted effect which, under the circumstances, is perfectly natural and to be expected, but which produces with most readers a feeling of something very like disappointment. After a short time and when the first flush of novelty has worn off, the European telegrams will be looked at with less and less interest; and excepting on those occasions when there is something worth reading, which will happen, as we have implied, about as frequently as formerly and not more so, most people will merely give them a passing glance. The great cable is after all only a means of transmitting, not a means of creating, intelligence; and although this latter hypothesis may have a chilling effect upon the ardent and public-spirited aspirations of some of our cotemporaries, there can be little doubt that it is suscepti-

ble of demonstration. If we could conceive that Europeans would immediately begin to cut each other's throats, burn down their cities, tar-and-feather their anointed sovereigns, or do any other monstrous and exciting things which would form staple for sensation headings—if they would do all this with a kindly eye to the exigencies of the cable and an affectionate sympathy for the New York press, then indeed the affair would be very different. But this is rather more than we have a reasonable right to expect, and our safest plan will be to merely look in the future for that average supply of horror and casualty which we have been accustomed to receive in the past. It is unlikely that the business of manufacturing canards will be either frequently or profitably pursued. The public already regard the ocean dispatches with considerable suspicion, and in one quarter, more particularly, they are taken with something more than a few grains of salt. One or two repetitions of the imaginative sallies which, as feelers, we presume, have already been "tried on" the long-suffering community will arouse a general incredulity, and an utter want of interest in any but business telegrams will be the offender's reward.

The Atlantic cable is a great thing, no doubt; a very great thing. But, like all things, whether great or small, it may be, to use the phrase which in its case has something more than a metaphorical application, run into the ground. Its uses and advantages are many, but it serves no good end to exaggerate them. The tendency to make newspapers sloppy, fragmentary, and superficial is sufficiently marked without further and extraneous encouragement. It is a fine thing to be able to regulate and temper our cotton and flour and gold markets by daily advices from the old world, but so far as the pleasure goes which is derivable from the perusal of news, it may be more than questioned whether it is made more intense by indefinite trituration and dilution, whether the American interest in European affairs is likely to be augmented by their progress being served out in homeopathic and often meaningless doses. Let us all make our best bows to the cable, let us give it becoming respect and gratitude, and let us appreciate to the full the lessons it teaches and the blessings which it brings; but let us not, as we are so prone to do with other things, "run it into the ground."

LAW AS A GENERAL STUDY.

YOUNG men who never expect to make practical use of their arithmetical powers beyond the rule of three nevertheless go through a full course of mathematics. Those who never intend to read Homer after they leave college spend many months over the study of Greek. Why should those who thus exercise their minds upon studies remote from their real course of life, so generally assume that law is a subject fit only for the study of those who make it their exclusive business? We think that in this view they err, and lose one of the best means not only of disciplining the mind, but of preparing for the tasks of life in any field.

Looking at it in the aspect of a mere mental training, there are few studies which ought to have a more beneficial effect than that of the law. Here logic has a broad field of facts upon which to work. Logic, as an abstract science, compared with law, may be said to be as a game of chequers compared with chess; or, more strictly, logic is chess with no pieces except pawns and kings; law is chess with ten thousand different pieces. It is unquestionably essential that principles should be studied in their abstract form; but it is a severer toil, and a more invigorating exercise, to find and develop principles from the confusion of facts as they exist. The student of law must constantly apply elementary truths to practical questions; he must balance equities; he must consider whether the doctrine which seems to work justice in a particular case will do so when applied to the mass of cases; he must take a heterogeneous mass of facts, and determine which have any bearing on the decision and which have none, and from the former educe a general proposition; he must qualify his own judgment by comparing it with that of higher authorities; he must reconcile decisions and even principles apparently in conflict with each other; he must sometimes reject, and assign a reason for re-

jecting, decisions which are unsound; and sometimes accept them, where they are too venerable to be shaken, modifying the course of justice as little as possible by them, and limiting as much as may be their bad effects.

It is true that many young men are admitted to the bar who never went through any such process as we have described. They have learned, almost by rote, a number of arbitrary rules, and have made such application of them as they found ready to their hands. They have a few forms in their heads, and have seen something of court practice. Altogether, they are able to answer the examiner's questions, and are duly licensed to practice at the expense of unfortunate clients. But the existence of such characters no more affects the value of genuine legal study than the fact that college diplomas are sometimes sold to ignorant men, or given as marks of honor to those who never read a line of Virgil, affects the value of a thorough classical education. The worth of the reality is indeed proved by the number who gladly take up the mere pretense.

Viewed in a practical light, as it is called, the study of law, to a moderate extent, is worth the time of any man, whether preparing for a trade or a profession. A merchant will be more careful in his bargains, where the law prescribes certain forms, if he is well acquainted with them; while a familiarity with the sound common sense which constitutes the bulk of the law of personal property will relieve him from those fears which ignorance of law breeds in the minds of many commercial men, and which often makes them more capacious and technical than the meanest pettifogger in a justice's court. The literary man will find his ideas enlarged and brought under a systematic arrangement by a course of legal study. The historian will nowhere find so faithful a record of private life as in the reports and ancient statutes; nor trace anywhere the advance of civilization and morality so well as in the progress of the law from medieval roughness to modern culture. The divine may not only be greatly improved in ability by the discipline of the study, but will be brought more into sympathy with man, and learn more of the practical application of moral truth, from a good law book, than from anything else which he can find in print. It is substantially the aim of both the civil and the common law to bring all human relations up to the standard of the divine law, so far as human restraints could effect that purpose, and as the authors of these laws understood their model. That the law falls short of its high aim is, of course, obvious upon a superficial examination; but it comes far nearer to it than is generally believed by the clergy. Human rewards and punishments are but rough tools with which to work out celestial justice; and the task of the judge and legislator may well be compared to the labor of one who undertakes to make a razor out of a bar of steel with no other tool than a file. But those who carefully study the law will have an increased faith in the capacity of a race which, amid the darkness of past ages, could fashion a temple of justice so well as did the Norman judges of England and the heathen jurists of Rome.

Let none be discouraged by the old saw, "A little knowledge is a dangerous thing." There is but a sprinkling of truth in the maxim. To know but a little of anything is not well; but there are few men who can gain a profound knowledge of many different things, and fewer still who will not be aided in perfecting themselves in one branch of learning by having a little knowledge of every other branch. A lawyer who knows something of theology, medicine, art, general literature, and the sciences will be all the better lawyer. And the same thing is true in turn of all the professions.

It is not altogether easy to give practical directions to those who desire to make the law a subject of private study without intending to pursue it, so much depends upon the time which can be given to it and the circumstances of each particular case. But, as a general thing, we should recommend to such students a course about as follows:

1. *Blackstone's or Kent's Commentaries*—the former for those who have a historical taste, and the latter for those who desire to obtain a general view of the law as it now is.

2. *Walker's American Law*.

3. *Story (Wm. W.) on Contracts*, or *Chitty*, or the first two volumes of *Parsons on Contracts*.

4. *Story (Joseph) on Agency, Bailments, Partnership, and Bills of Exchange*.

5. *Story on Equity Jurisprudence*.

6. Some series of good reports, selecting the cases of general value upon commercial law, the law of contracts, etc., and omitting practice cases, etc., which are useful only to the professional lawyer. The volumes of *Leading Cases* edited respectively by Smith, by Hare & Wallace, and by Tudor are good for this purpose, and contain no cases unsuitable to the general student.

7. Those who are fond of historical studies should read some of the oldest reports, such as the translated edition of the *Year-books*, *Plowden*, *Dyer*, *Croke*, *Hobart*, *Modern Reports*, etc. Only a part of each volume will be useful, many cases being uninteresting.

The course here marked out, though small for a lawyer, is probably larger than many general students will care to pursue. Those who can read but little will do well to read *Kent's Commentaries*, if nothing else. The *Civil Code* prepared for this state, by commissioners, in 1865, will also be found to give a more compendious view of the law than can be obtained in any other book. For the most part it sets forth the law as it is; but some of its text consists of proposed amendments not yet enacted, and therefore the notes to the text would need attention. It is a somewhat rare book, but can be purchased upon order at a lower price than any other law book we have named.

SOME ODOROUS COMPARISONS.

THAT respectable newspaper, *The Evening Post*, has recently taken occasion to print some rather discourteous observations about THE ROUND TABLE, among which, in one instance, after using some adjectives whose application must of necessity react upon their writer, it is affirmed that THE ROUND TABLE is not "as good" as the first class literary weeklies of similar aims which are published in London; not as good, to be explicit, as *The Athenæum* or *The Saturday Review*. Now, the principle which seems to guide so many cotemporaneous journals in respect to the eternal veracities is none of ours, and there are plenty of journals, as it is hardly needful to say, whose aspersions of whatever sort we shall always think it unnecessary to notice. *The Evening Post* has the deserved reputation of being, in general, so temperate and fair-minded as well as so dignified a sheet, that for once, and in connection with its late observations, we propose to make an exception to our usual practice so far as to indulge in a few sentences of reply. With these preliminary explanations, we beg simply to acknowledge that *The Evening Post* is quite right. THE ROUND TABLE is not in all respects as good a periodical as *The Saturday Review*. Our cotemporary is perfectly right; but he has not said enough. He should have added that America is not so old a country as England, that New York does not contain so many people as London, that the houses of parliament are larger than our city hall, that our Trinity cannot hold a candle to Westminster Abbey, and that neither *The Evening Post* nor any other paper published in New York is as good a paper as *The London Times*. Since frankness is in vogue, pray let us have enough of it. Let the jewel of fair play be occasionally heard of even in the amenities of newspaper discussion. We have not the slightest hesitancy in admitting that with all our earnest and unemitting exertions we have not, in the course of a twelvemonth, in a community where such undertakings have always hitherto proved failures, succeeded in making a better literary and critical weekly than one which has been established for many years in a highly appreciative and ancient community, and one which is, in some particulars, not only the best of its class in the world but probably the best which the world has yet seen. To claim that we have reached the acme of perfection, that there is nothing left for us to achieve, that THE ROUND TABLE is in every possible respect all that we would have it—and mean to make it—would be as vain as absurd. We write for intelligent and educated people, not for a rabble of muddle-headed and half-tipsy bores, and affect-

tion in such a matter would be utterly stupid and unprofitable. We leave for certain of the dailies and for the chambermaid and grog-shop weeklies the field of ridiculous misrepresentation as to their positions and achievements; it is one in which they pre-eminently shine, and one wherein we have no desire to compete with them. Neither do we object, as we claim the privilege to speak the truth of others, to have the truth spoken about ourselves. As aforesaid, we do not find fault with *The Post* for printing the truth of us; we do find fault that it prints too little truth, and that little in a spirit too illiberal to be worthy of it. There are various ways, good and ill-natured, of putting a comparison. Such a thing may be very salutary or it may be excessively invidious. *The Evening Post*, we repeat, might come halting off in an exhaustive comparison with *The London Times*, or even, as perhaps might be more pertinent, in a comparison with *The Standard* or *The Pall-Mall Gazette*. But we should be sorry to push such a parallel in an ungenerous spirit. The situation is different, the countries are different, the tastes of society are different; in fine, there are plenty of excellent reasons why *The Evening Post* should be as deserving, or more deserving, in being what it is than either of the papers last named in being what they are. That it has exerted a generally healthful and progressive influence upon the community, it is but common honesty to admit. We know not, indeed, how in the last five years *The Evening Post* could have been spared and the country yet stand where it is. Yet it certainly is not a perfect newspaper. It is prone to be dull and didactic. It permits itself to indulge in prejudices which are the reverse of cosmopolitan. It is a trifle too timid at times, both in squarely praising what is good and squarely denouncing what is bad. It is a little too apt to allow trivial matters of personal taste or distaste to cloud its sense of justice respecting obnoxious nations, persons, or things. But, apart from these criticisms, which are, of course, matters of individual opinion, there is no journal in the country which ought to be more ready to aid the success of a paper with such aims as our own than *The Evening Post*. None should know better the existence of the empty niche, or the consideration due to those who honestly strive to fill it, than *The Evening Post's* principal editors. The one of exalted position, the other a laborious and scholarly historian—the one of venerable years, the other well on in manhood's prime, none should know better than they, with their culture and their experience, how injurious to American letters and society have been crude and imperfect criticisms, hasty and cruel literary judgments, heated and intemperate political animosities, and many other evils which we have essayed in our humble way to remedy and assuage. Undoubtedly we may at times have made mistakes. All are liable to err. But our errors, whatever they may have been or may be, have never been or ever will be such as are incompatible with the earnest desire and profound ambition to cherish and advance the cause of national literature, of sound criticism, and of good morals.

As regards the question of comparative excellence or the means of improvement in the future, we must, of course, use our own judgment, since none can be more interested than ourselves in the result. Past experiments have conclusively shown that we should be altogether unlikely to reach the port we aim at by steering in the wake of any predecessor. Our course must needs be in a great measure an original one. Nor can we, in the different situation, altogether follow European examples. We must be governed by our own will, sagacity, and enterprise—such as they are. We must be our own pilot, and guide the helm by our own star. The track is certainly not without its perils, but we have a great deal of, we hope sufficiently modest, self-reliance. No week passes but that we are striving and devising to make *THE ROUND TABLE* a better and stronger publication than it is. In this the public is generously aiding us, and we trust will continue so to do; and, while we shall always be glad of appreciation and friendly recognition from the cotemporary press, we are well aware that it is to the public and not to newspapers, however excellent and influential, that we must look for the substantial assurance of our future.

Comparisons, as Dogberry meant to say, are odious. We should certainly not have thought of originating a discussion founded upon so objectionable a basis. As the case stands, however, we may perhaps be pardoned for humbly expressing an opinion—an opinion which there is no impropriety in prefacing by the statement that, as the present writer has contributed largely to at least two unquestionably leading presses in both New York and London, he thinks himself fairly qualified to form and entitled to express it. If, then, the first-rate press of London is to be regarded as the ideal or standard of excellence, we deliberately affirm that, whether in point of paper, types, or the brains wherewith they are used, *THE ROUND TABLE* is to-day nearer the mark of the leading English weeklies than any newspaper in New York is to the mark of the best English dailies; and we have not the slightest doubt whatever that any educated and unprejudiced person who shall carefully make the comparison will indorse this affirmation as a candid, unvarnished, and irrefragable truth.

SCULPTURE AT THE CAPITAL.

ACCORDING to an essayist in one of our journals, Galileo recorded his opinion in favor of painting as the superior of sculpture. Galileo was a wise man; but no one will deem the vexed question set at rest by the dictum of an astronomer, even though he were Galileo and an art-wise Italian. It will doubtless continue to be a theme of debate in the great American art epoch of the future. Demonstration to end the dispute seems impossible; but the arguments on either side are instructive; and the knowledge of art has been largely increased by the discussion of an issue that can never be settled. If Galileo lived now, and in this country, he would have less hesitation in reaching the same conclusion than in his own sunny Italy. While painting thrives, each season showing swift progress of the colorists toward a great and true national school, sculpture is still in swaddling-clothes, or, in a few cases where it has cast off these, has gotten an ill growth of body and a stunted soul. Our statues, of which we are so vain, are but unsightly objects to the student who seeks earnestly the significance of things.

Sculpture presents many claims to a higher respect than its sister. It holds a power and dignity which painting cannot attain. Its massiveness is impossible to a plane surface. The appearance of roundness and solidity, necessarily imperfect, cannot afford that satisfaction which is given by the real mass, having length, breadth, and thickness of material wrought into a high significance. The element of weight constrains attention and gives a certain satisfaction to the mind of the beholder. One feels, too, a comforting assurance of the durability of sculpture. Painting is imponderable; and with our delight at the best works of our painters mingles a feeling of insecurity against time; we look forward, and the illuminated glory, in a few centuries at most, may flake off or "sink." A bust in bronze may be safely sent across the abyss to future ages, but no painter can be sure of his color for three hundred years.

The impression of sacrifice in a statue is greater than in a picture. The cost of a block of marble for a life-size statue can in ordinary times be scarcely less than \$500, and the money which the sculptor must pay his workmen must be nearly as much. Bronze costs more. The expense of material for a picture is only a trifle, and the painter in ordinary undertakings pays nothing for labor. In sculpture the material itself is a source of delight; the purity, luster, and strength of marble enhance even the magic of genius. Pigments are or should be lost in design. These are some of the reasons which show that it is not the inferiority of the art which causes it to lag behind its gayer sister. Rome in her palaces holds more palpable proofs—the great souls of the ancients in stone. The trouble with us is, in truth, our own failure infecting our artists to appreciate the dignity of sculpture. We commit a fatal blunder in applying to it the same laws which govern painting. Our modelers seem to be actuated by a low ambition to produce effects which shall be immediately popular. That the limits of sculpture are narrower than those of painting is well enough established; but our sculp-

tors seem to think that they can make new laws unto themselves, or that they can get on very well without laws.

In art the people are still ignorant and intemperate, liking tricks and "effects" too well to banish them—so our statuary has taken a transient stage-scenic character, which, it is to be hoped, may be quite as fleeting and unsubstantial as it seems. These works are not for contemplation; they are for immediate admiration, and a glance is enough. The frantic striving to produce something monstrous defeats itself. We cannot trifle with marble and bronze. Such materials are too difficult of handling, as well as too costly, for the representation of anything unimportant or temporary. A trivial action in marble is an offense. The law of repose in sculpture, so earnestly advocated by most art-scholars, is cardinal, and to be profoundly considered. At present, indeed, it is our only safeguard. Not the least deviation from symmetry and quiet—not even the lifting of an arm—should be allowed without palpably just motive. Until this law of tranquillity, springing from the very soul of the art, is recognized and reverently obeyed, we shall achieve nothing fit to endure. The law does not require servile compliance or subjection. Men are not gods, and cannot, therefore, be always represented as immutably symmetrical. As we cannot carve a likeness of the soul or of an emotion, we must represent it by means of its best exponent—human action must pervade statues of men. But we should not lose sight of the fact that sculpture is godlike, and that the best and greatest men and the most heroic deeds are fittest for the everlasting honor of marble and bronze.

Mr. Clark Mills, sculptor, of Washington, made an equestrian statue of Gen. Jackson, which now adorns the park opposite the President's house. This work was hailed as a triumph of art, because the combined figures of the man and horse were supported solely by the horse's hind legs. Nobody considered whether the statue would not have been finer and more satisfactory had it rested firmly on three or four legs, and thought of it as designed for thousands of years and unlikely to support its weight beyond two or three centuries or the next earthquake. And yet the admiration excited by this particular merit was such that we might augur a perfect outburst of popular enthusiasm had Mr. Mills thought proper to set his horse upon the tail alone! Again: the figure of Jackson lifts its hat with the manner of a riding-master at a public exhibition. Gen. Jackson has doubtless been seen in an attitude like that; but to set him before the people for ever as a mounted Turveydrop is certainly too heavy a penalty for so slight an offense. Instead of the hero's life, which might have been brought before us had the sculptor looked beyond his trick of balance, we have now a cheap five minutes thereof, and no effort of the imagination can rescue this figure from its trivial distortion. Bowing and raising the hat are actions scarcely worthy of eternal perpetuation in bronze. If no better work than this can be found for representation, let the hero be seen at rest. Thought is greater than action.

The equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius, which now stands on the Capitol Hill at Rome, is esteemed by connoisseurs the finest in the world. In this the figures of both man and horse are undisturbed by immediate action, but pervaded by a great tranquil strength, full of latent power. It is worthy of notice that Michael Angelo, whose admiration of this horse is well known, did not say when he first saw the statue, "Prance," or "Gallop," but simply, "Walk." This statue of Jackson is in every way the worst possible example of that branch of art; and the equestrian statue of Washington, located a few squares west of this, is of the same kind by the same hand. They have made the sculptor famous, and will soon be a disgrace to the country. If Buonarroti had made his Moses in the act of wiping his nose, it could scarcely have been more absurd than this capering Jackson; yet the art-knowing Italians would surely have torn him in pieces. It is not the fault of Mr. Mills, perhaps, that balancing and art are at present identical in the popular mind. Blondin takes his triumph now; Praxiteles thrills remote ages past and to come. It is natural that the American sculptor should covet the laurels of both in the present, for he is born of the impatient people.

THE PROBLEM OF THE SUMMER.

A JUSTER classification will doubtless sometime be made which shall place man among the hibernating animals. His winter habits differ from theirs, but he is one of them in relation to his work. For agriculture, the great author and supporter of all other callings, is wholly suspended during the winter months; out-door employment, with the exception of ice-cutting, is given over; and although authors and artists are given to working up during winter the material they have snatched from nature in their summer jaunts across her domain, they are a species by themselves, and in nowise affect the general rule that man is idle in cold weather. For what is the "fall trade" but a general laying-in of some necessities and many superfluities for winter consumption, as a bear packs his tissues with layers of fat? So the rule that spring is the awakening of both animate and inanimate life is more sweeping than appears at first sight; it is the point of departure for work, for display, for enjoyment, for the main business or enjoyment of the year, whatever that may be, and the summer is the gauge of the year, the ruling time to which all the rest moves; it is the time not of working only, but of living. The philosophy of the seasons, the great under-law for which they exist—whether they change simply to give zest to each successive one, or whether (as an ingenious English medical writer suggests) they are meant to execute the penalty of death upon the race by alternations of heat and cold, is too remote for human study; yet we may take it as settled that they mean something, and that summer means most and contains the problem of the year. And if we could discover what the problem of summer is—not absolutely in itself, like a truth of mathematics, but relatively to ourselves—we should discover the clearest mirror in which to read ourselves.

To a large fraction of the population of the city summer is longer days, more fetid air, increased thirst and bodily discomfort, sunstroke, dysentery, and the cholera. They reckon from their twin calamities, summer and winter, as London after the merry monarch reckoned from the fire and the plague; they know that in February so many of them will certainly be found dead with starvation and cold, and eaten by rats, and that in July so many will be wilted out of life by the sun they cannot flee—and that is all their knowledge about the matter. To the farmer in the country summer is the period that decides, by its drought or its rains, whether his year is to be a failure and his mortgage cleared off, or his anticipated coupon-bonds bought. To the working business men of the city it is a time in which they try to renew their youth—youth which many of them, matured under pressure, never had. Were it not so sad, it would be ludicrous to see them try to swallow recreation and nature as they swallow medicine, by the quantity. They see the sun rise at Catskill and have the fall "turned-on" in season for dinner and the stage; they steam through Lake George and back, and stop one night at Caldwell; they arrive at Niagara at midnight and leave at noon; they pass their days in town and sleep at Long Branch—and, withal, wonder where the charm and the blessing are hidden. But their wonder is itself wonderful, for in their hearts they despise the country, counting the city the world and the rest but a necessary tender to it; so, in their offering to nature, they keep back part of the price, withholding their hearts and only partially giving their eyes. Among the White Mountains it is not mountains they see with their glazed, fixed eyes; they see the town, the roar of its streets surges in their ears, and they seem to be moving in it, for their hearts are there, and they have given to the country only macerated bodies and heavy brains, without souls. They are the prey of landlords and gain only the fatigue of unaccustomed work. They forget that mountains and rivers must be lived with before they are known; that nature is feminine and is to be wooed, not taken by storm; that of her it is true that

"You must love her ere to you
She will seem worthy of your love."

But how is the companion picture—our queens and reigning dowagers of society? More absurd than the child who does n't want to go to heaven unless he can take his toys there, they are unhappy unless

they can have four trunks apiece, and teach nature the superiority of art. Theirs is a butterfly summer, in which hearts and social position are the stakes they play for. The summer is over now, and they are all returning. We may set it down that there are so many ill-joined, loveless marriages, so many plotting hearts sick with hope again deferred, so many well-laid schemes "gang aley," so many bubbles of social position pricked, so many social orders shifted, and so many people dying of ennui and finding that life is pumped dry. To these people the world is like a granite ledge to a fly—perfectly tasteless, because simply insoluble; they have no organs that can adapt it to their uses—those uses also easily becoming withered and stale. Beauty is as truly a subjective matter as appreciation is; it is first in the spectator's soul or not in his eyes, it is in his eyes or never in the objects he sees. So old and plain a truth is forgotten every summer; yet the simple crucial question for travelers is now, just as it was in the days of John the Baptist, "But what went ye out for to see?" If nature were painted and wore a hoop and a waterfall, and a bit of rainbow-cloud on her head, perhaps these bored and blasé people would recognize her as of their set, by virtue of the oldness of her family; but they do not now. Their aim is to outshine; they are all would-be Settemdounes. The presumption of some people troubles them. The value of their stakes bears no just relation to the absorbing earnestness of their game. There is no freshness in what the victors win, for it is only that they have demonstrated a more gorgeous wardrobe, a more commanding "presence," a lordlier society-odor, than anybody else; they win nothing but the consciousness of victory. And this consciousness? It is fine to be at the top of the wave; but in this country of no hereditary estates the trough of the wave is very close to the top, and diamonds speedily swing back to native dirt. And as for the vanquished, they go to the foot, for society is merciless. Much of life must needs be unsuccessful effort, whose consolation ought to be the consciousness of having failed to reach something worth having; how shall we measure the defeat of those who fail in reaching after what is intrinsically worthless and unsatisfying?

It is because beauty seemingly ought to contain everything within itself that our imagination endows beautiful women with largesses of all other gifts. We may fancy that Nature herself feels a matronly pride in the perfections of these of her children; and since decay seems abhorrent to them, we may believe that the hills and fields look at them with the tenderest pity that they must inevitably pass away. How must these loving ones, who know time and the laws of things, mourn their want of tongues when they see their beautiful visitors thoughtlessly accelerate their own decay! For there are so many who persist in turning over the leaves without reading what is written thereon; who refuse to learn the lesson of what they see and will not receive life as it is given them. For these Edmund Waller meant his serenade:

"Go, lovely rose!
Tell her who wastes her time and me,
That now she knows,
When I resemble her to thee,
How sweet and fair she seems to be.

"Then die! that she
The common fate of all things rare
May read in thee—
How small a part of time they share
That are so wondrous sweet and fair."

The summer suggests other questions, both social and personal. It is simply because the curve in which the seasons move is so vast that we lightly imagine it a circle; it is a regularly recurring order, but yet no circle—it is a spiral. Can we find no lesson in this? The builders of the tower of Babel went round and round but yet rose, although they came out so haplessly; if we are satisfied with traveling in a circle we are no better than they. The question each flying year puts to us is, how much we have gained in living; and because summer is the active and moving part of the year this is peculiarly the question of summer. Commerce and Christianity, in new regions, march not far apart; not that there is any alliance between them, natural or conventional, but Christianity never more than waits for commerce to make the way, and sometimes adventurously be-

comes leader herself—there is no antagonism between them. On the other hand, there does sometimes seem to be an artificial antagonism between commerce and culture. In our commercial center there is not even a public library, much less scientific facilities open to all; art and music are to be had, in a measure, by paying for them, provided one's appreciation be not too high; and although we are all wild to see a foreign notable municipally drawn through Broadway in a "contingencies" barouche we do not care for oratory. Even concede wealth to be, necessarily, the first step of the social ladder, it does not look well to sit contentedly there. For wealth is not culture or society, and never can be; dear object of universal desire though it be, it is simply like dirt, out of which a skillful chemist will produce sweet odors, while to most people it remains dirt still. In the hands of an uncultivated person it is a noon-day, even to weak eyes. A genuine aristocracy is impossible here, as we have no landed estates, and families cannot be kept together; a society of culture we have not as yet, and the society of wealth is a child's afternoon-party burlesque. It is just that society which Europe sees most and laughs at; which meets landlords instead of nature, and measures seasons by the pettiest triumphs; which, in town, makes it a hard matter for more cultivated persons of narrower incomes to live at all, and in summer denies them—who, having eyes, could see—the privilege of greeting nature in her home. Yet some who stay at home see her and understand her secrets better than many who go. For the fruition of the year is not really in the edible fruits of the year; it is in sharpened eyes and enlarged souls. The lesson of all seasons lies not in their variations of temperature, of green beauty and white, of pains and delights, for these fluctuate for ever about hidden fixed points; it is in the more occult laws they obey, the subtle relations they bear to life, the advances in growth they offer. Those who find them all alike, returning in a fixed circle, get nothing out of them but the full shock of time; those whose lives ripen in them into growing sweetness, fullness, content, are the only ones who see or solve the problem of the summer.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MINNESOTA.

IN CAMP, LAKE MINNETONKA, August 20, 1866.

THIS is surely a section of the country not much given to literature—these forest wilds of Minnesota. In fact, we have seen no books at all except the two volumes of *The Knickerbocker*, *Shakespeare*, and *Reveries of a Bachelor* which are included among our camp supplies. But it is a good place to think about the writers and what they have written—a better place, perhaps, to form good judgments of the world of letters than at home among authors and books innumerable. So we lounge listlessly about our island camp, musing pleasantly upon the kings and queens of literature, and calling to mind the names of those most welcome.

Few books are more bewitching to one removed from "civilization" than this same early work of Ik Marvel, the *Reveries of a Bachelor*. Mr. Mitchell has never written so well or so entertainingly since. His late efforts are less compact and less impressive. We lay down our rod and rifle day after day to return to these simple, beautiful sketches well called *Reveries*. It is the best attempt at this sort of writing that we have ever seen, nor can we imagine anything more perfect in its way. If the farmer of Edgewood has any more such pearls in his casket we beg that he will give them to the public, and thus make doubly sure a promised first position among American authors.

The two volumes of *The Knickerbocker* also furnish us with many pleasant interludes to hunting and fishing. This very morning, by the early sunlight, we stretched ourselves upon the bank by the shores of Minnetonka and dozed among the pages of this grand old monthly. And all the time we were wondering that it could have failed. Once so bright and spicy and genial—now utterly dead and buried even to its shadow. We have never had any magazine to compare with it. *The Atlantic* has never equaled it in geniality and sprightliness. *Putnam's Monthly* was more excellent as a literary review, but it was never the magazine that the brothers Clark sent forth through so many years. *The Galaxy* has a fair opportunity to rival the fame of *Old Knick*, but in the departments of literary and art notes and gossip it will have to take a long step forward to achieve so popu-

lar a position. It surely is wondrous strange that New York does not send forth a greater and better magazine, and we can but hope that *The Galaxy* will grow brighter and sprightlier as it grows older. It has for publishers two of the best men in New York—true, wholesome, conscientious—and we can but send them our hopes and wishes from this lodge in the wilderness.

It surely is wonderful how a very few years will produce a total transformation of fames, firms, and everything that enters into the weal and woe of life. Speaking of magazines calls to mind such a vicissitude. We met the other day in Minneapolis the son of the founder of *The Atlantic Monthly*, one of the firm of Phillips & Sampson, the well-known Boston publishing house. This establishment was to all appearances progressing most swimmingly when there came a sudden and fatal collapse. And to add to the disaster the two members of the firm died of consumption. Then there was trouble about the settlement of affairs, which resulted in a good deal of disappointment to the parties interested. Altogether it was a sad termination to what seemed to the outer world a complete success. Another such vicissitude is suggested by some boxes of matches which lie before us, and which bear the name of "John P. Jewett & Co., Boston, Mass." This was a leading publishing house of Boston, remembered by all for its immense success with *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. But somehow the strength of the house suddenly departed, and now instead of books we have matches.

Few books are more salable in the far West than those of Dr. Holland. We saw hardly anything else sold on the railroads between Chicago and St. Paul, and were told by the newsboys that no books sell so well. The doctor certainly is better appreciated in the West than in the East. Here he is esteemed as a lecturer more than almost any other on the list. Doubtless his practical good sense and earnest, unaffected sympathy with the average of thought and sentiment occasion this. We remember to have heard that immediately after the appearance of the *Titecomb Letters* Dr. Holland received many letters seeking advice in matters of love, courtship, and marriage. Some of these were extremely ludicrous, some contained money as a fee, and some showed a weakness past belief. Of none of these would the doctor permit any sport to be made, always reading them carefully, sometimes kindly answering them, and never allowing any of them to be made jest of by any person. The money was, of course, returned. We shall be very much surprised if Dr. Holland does not, from his new home at Brightwood, send forth a poem—one that will give him more reputation than all his previous works.

We have been thinking, as we have lounged about in and out of our tent, of certain writers that have too long been silent. Who that has laughed over *Prismatics* and the *Sparrowgrass Papers* does not feel a desire for something more from Mr. Cozzens? Why will he not quit his wine business for a time once again to rouse us with his inimitable geniality? There is a lawyer, too, who has sung for us of *Nothing to Wear* and *Two Millions*, but who has given us nothing since. Why will not Mr. Butler abandon his briefs long enough to fling another poetic arrow? We have had lumberly, overstrained books in abundance. There is a want of some light, genial efforts—a little more of genius and a little less of Gail Hamilton moralizing. There are men enough

"Steady, straightforward, and strong
With irresistible logic,"

but not enough of the lighter sort, with quivers full of wit and satire. Probably there was never a time in the literary history of the country when a good and great satire would be more acceptable than now. The philosophers, doctors, and quacks have had it their own way long enough, and deserve a good round broadside. Newell ("Orpheus C. Kerr") could do it. Stedman could do it. Boker and Halpin could do it. And so could Stoddard and Barber. Perhaps Stedman would be as likely as any to make it successful. At all events, we wish somebody would try, and if possible create a little pungent life in the literary world. Of course, Holmes and Lowell are the best for this work, but they are too well to do in the world to undertake any new effort. Of the younger men, we incline to think that Howells is quite unapproachable, and we should not be surprised if he should yet astonish us with a brand of fire. William Winter is as bright a genius as we know of in the New York world, but he is too much engaged with routine labor. If Clarence Cook were a poet he could write a good satire, for his tongue is sharper than a sword, and his pen is not far behind it.

We met the other day, in some of our rambles, with John Pierpont, the poet—now grown old and gray. Mr. Pierpont has for five years been a clerk in the Treasury Department at Washington. His particular field has been the compilation of an indexical ledger to the custom-house correspondence of the country. He has

worked at it until his eyes are well-nigh used up and his general health very much disordered. It seems too bad that he who sang so pleasantly not many years ago, in verse that all can recall, should be compelled to tug and toil as a common clerk during the last years of his life. But this is only another of the strange vicissitudes of life.*

Once in a while we indulge in a reverie about this state of Minnesota and its future—wondering when it will be thickly peopled, and if art and literature will ever have a place among its various developments. We do not know of an artist in the state now. And yet there is not the world over a finer field for the study of rich coloring. The sunsets are really glorious. The literary taste, too, out of St. Paul, is hardly recognizable. For instance, Murdoch gave a public reading a few evenings since, and to his infinite disgust found awaiting him an audience of only a dozen persons. But time will change these things, so that the country that inspired the song of *Hiawatha* will become like the eastern states—a land of books, of readers, and of literary taste.

We are writing these random notes on the sunniest day and in the clearest air that we have ever known. Just before us is a great and beautiful lake, behind us a thicket and forest. Our tent is pitched on an island whereon we can assert to a certainty that there are no other human beings. The "commissary" is getting the game in readiness for dinner; our hunter-in-chief lies upon his back devouring Shakespeare with as much avidity as did ever literary knight or lady; our writing desk is of a primitive kind, unknown to the Broadway dealers; above us are bushes, canvas, and grand old gnarled trees; in the forests behind us all kinds of game make their home, from pheasants to deer, while in the lake before us there are piscatorial monsters of fabulous sizes. Guns, rifles, and revolvers, and every form and shape of fishing apparatus, are about us. Such is our present camp, and from hence we send our words of greeting to the readers of THE ROUND TABLE. If Joseph Barber ("J. B.") were only here, the fish and deer would hold a carnival in his honor.

C. H. S.

PHILADELPHIA.

PHILADELPHIA, September 3, 1866.

PHILADELPHIA continues to be the center of political excitement. This day has commenced a convention of southern Unionists, which will hold its sittings for some time, and which comes on pretty soon after the great gathering recently held in the Wigwam, and the coolish reception here, last Tuesday, of the President and his friends en route to Chicago. There will be a great mass meeting, thoroughly radical, in front of the Union League House, on Wednesday evening. It is advertised that "speeches will be made by" thirty-four eminent publicists, whose names are given, "and other distinguished men"—say by forty in all. Average these at ten minutes for each of forty speeches, and there will be a total of four hundred minutes, or nearly seven hours', continuous oratory. There are at least ten gentlemen among the forty who can hardly state their views in less than twenty-five minutes each. Of course, then, only half a dozen will speak; but it is a favorite habit here to advertise as certain to speak gentlemen who frequently are not even present. I fancy that something like this has occasionally happened in New York. But the habit is a bad one.

This is the dull time, as to book-publishing, in Philadelphia. Mr. T. B. Peterson announces, however, a work with the agreeable title of *The White Scalper*, being a story of Indian life by that wonderfully clever Frenchman, Gustave Aimard, who annually produces two or three romances of Mexican and Indian adventure, which sell largely in France, and obtain still greater continental circulation through being pirated by Brussels publishers, and by being translated into German, Russian, and Spanish—to say nothing of the sale of the English versions. For the last ten years, certainly since the death of Eugene Sue in 1857, Aimard's romances have constituted the principal reading-stock, in the way of fiction, of all classes of people in France, from the moderately independent small *rentiers* down to the very lowest grades. Yet, though living in an age when there is intense curiosity about publicists of all degrees, and particularly artists, actors, and authors, I have been unable to find the slightest biographical notice of Gustave Aimard in any publication whatever. Not in *The Men of the Time*, nor yet in *Griffin's Dictionary of Contemporary Biography*; not in any British or American cyclopædia; not in *Vapereau's Dictionnaire des Contemporains*, which notices living persons, nor in *Didot's Nouvelle Biographie Générale*, now in course of publication, which

* This was obviously penned before the news could have reached our colleague of the aged clergyman's death.—Eds. ROUND TABLE.

professes to do the same. Yet Aimard has written more works of fiction than Cooper or Scott, and is probably as much read now as they were in the flush of their popularity. I have heard that Aimard, who cannot yet be considered a middle-aged man, being under the age of forty-five (the "grand climacteric year" being sixty-three in a man's life), spent several years of his early manhood in Mexico, and lived among the wild nomadic or hunting tribes during the greater portion of that time.

This will account for the spirit with which he has described these barbaric tribes, particularly the Apaches, the Utahs, and the Comanches. The list of his romances published by Peterson would occupy many lines, and it is intended, I learn, to issue one work a month, in future, until the whole series is brought up to Aimard's very latest production. Accordingly, *The Freebooters*, now in the press, will follow *The White Scalper*. A new novel by Mrs. Henry Wood is also among Peterson's announcements, and an American story, scene chiefly in Albany and New York, by J. A. Maitland, an Englishman, who wrote several novels while resident in New York some years ago, but is now connected with the London press.

Mr. Lippincott, the head of the publishing house of J. B. Lippincott & Co., has returned to Philadelphia, after a prolonged and extensive foreign tour, literally extending from St. Petersburg to Rome, during which he made arrangements with the principal publishers, particularly those of England and Scotland, simultaneously to produce the best of their new books here and in their own respective localities. Of course, so much the less American-made paper will thereby be consumed and so much the less wages paid to American type-setters, but this has to be accepted as the natural result of high prices here, swollen naturally during the war but unnaturally kept up after the war had ended.

In connection with this subject, I have to mention that Mr. H. C. Baird, of this city, announces, translated by Dr. Horatio Paine, a *Practical Guide for the Manufacture of Paper and Boards*, by A. Proteaux, civil engineer and practical paper-maker at Puy-de-Dôme. An account of the manufacture of paper from wood in the United States will be added. Almost every newspaper in Philadelphia is now printed on paper made from wood, at Manayunk, within the limits of the city.

There exists in this city an institution comparatively new—not in principle, for it is based on the system of mutual assurance—which, having entered upon its second year, may be considered as having so far succeeded. The plan is to insure a certain sum to widows on their husbands' death, without any very heavy tax upon the husband while he lives. On entrance into the society, which now has six hundred members, each newly-elected member pays five dollars as admission fee. This money is allowed to accumulate, at interest, on safe investment. There is no future payment by way of regular annual subscription, but whenever a member dies every surviving associate has to pay a contribution of \$1.05. The small fraction of a dollar is to pay for expense of notice, through the post-office—a printed circular—and postage. The dollar contribution goes to the widow, who gets as many dollars as there are members. There are over 600 members now, and the number is increasing. The age of a candidate for membership is not considered when his being elected is before the society, but it is expected that the proposer and seconder will affirm that their candidate is not in bad health. At present the ages of the members vary from 25 to 65. It may be suspected that the demands upon members individually, on account of defunct brethren, would be so frequent as to constitute as heavy a tax as if insurance (properly assurance) had been effected in a regular life assurance office. As yet, after nearly two years' operation, only three members have died: one between 25 and 35; one between 35 and 45, and the third at the age of 50. Consequently each member has had to pay \$3.15, on account of these deaths, in twenty months, and three widows have received \$1,800 between them. Of course, there may occasionally be a heavier rate of mortality, but it has been calculated that ten deaths per annum would be very much above what, as mathematical science has estimated, ought to be the average. At present this society is limited in its membership to freemasons, and is not yet very much known even in that body, being chiefly confined to Germans and their friends. The idea, I am told, has been derived from Germany, where such associations are to be found in nearly every city and town. As THE ROUND TABLE's circulation will carry it into a great variety of classes all over the Union, I have adopted this mode of communicating to the public a brief description of an association which may be advantageously copied in other places than in Philadelphia. It really is the very simplest and cheapest system of mutual life assurance ever put in operation, and is particularly adapted, on account of its cheap-

ness, to the industrial classes, who cannot afford to pay heavy rates to the more imposing and more costly offices.

Permit me to remark, in connection with this subject, and in the capacity of "A Constant Reader," upon a note to an article in your last number upon *Life Assurance* ("the English practice is to use the word insurance as applicable to inanimate objects, as houses, ships, and so forth, and assurance as referring to lives") that, once upon a time, some enterprising spirits in Dublin, who did not much relish the idea of having most of the life assurances in Ireland effected in the great English offices, started a company of their own. Mr. O'Connell was appointed one of the directors, and his eldest son, Maurice O'Connell, a barrister, was placed in office as standing counsel, with a nice little salary annexed. The company was organized during the absence of both the O'Connells in London, and, by way of making it particularly attractive, it was called "The National Assurance Company of Ireland." Unfortunately (to use the slang of to-day) it "came to grief," and soon got into Chancery. At that time Lord Plunkett, who did not like O'Connell, was chancellor of Ireland, and the case came before him. Taking up the papers, which he examined through an imposing eye-glass, he said in his most sarcastic manner, and with the effective keenness which always drove his shafts home, "The National Assurance Company of Ireland! Do you tell me, Mr. Monaghan [now chief-justice of the Common Pleas]—do you tell me that this company has failed?" The reply was, "It has." "Not from want of capital, I am sure. With one O'Connell as director and another as standing counsel, it is obvious that such a company must have possessed an unlimited capital—of assurance."

Mention of Maurice O'Connell, eldest son of "The Liberator" (a title which the member for all Ireland was so proud of that he instituted a semi-knightly "Order of Liberators"), reminds me of an authentic anecdote of him. There was sufficient liberality in his day, now over forty years back, to permit Roman Catholics to enter Trinity College, Dublin, though they could not graduate there without taking certain anti-Catholic Orange oaths—renouncing, according to old custom, the Pope, the Devil, and the Pretender. The elder O'Connell resolved that his young Ascanius should become an alumnus of "Old Trinity," and took him to Dr. Stack, reputed to be a tolerant man, who was a junior fellow and tutor of the college. This gentleman accepting the charge, which added somewhat to his income, said, "I presume, Mr. O'Connell, that you will make your son a lawyer?" At that time the elder O'Connell had not entered Parliament, but had the reputation of being the most eminent man and earning the largest income at the Irish bar. "No!" he answered; "no, Doctor Stack. I shall make him a barrister; he must make himself a lawyer." Unfortunately, "Master Maurice," as he was called, did not distinguish himself at the bar, and did not practice after his marriage, in 1832, to the heiress of Bindon Scott, of Cahircorn, in the county of Clare. The lady was a Protestant, and her large fortune was derived from being a lay-impropriator of tithes in Ireland. So, when O'Connell père succeeded in reducing, in nearly abolishing, Irish tithes (payable by the many to support the law-established church of the few), he almost reduced his favorite son and daughter-in-law to something which might be called poverty when contrasted with their original very large income. Maurice O'Connell died in 1853, and of all the great O'Connell's sons only one survives, who holds a sinecure under the "Saxon" government in Ireland.

R. S. M.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

EMANUEL SWEDENBORG.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ROUND TABLE:

DEAR SIR: It is related of a certain controversialist that on being reminded, in the course of a heated dispute, that his statements were contradicted by facts, he angrily replied, "So much the worse for the facts." Your contributor, "W. C.," in his letter on *Swedenborg and Spiritualism*, which I find in THE ROUND TABLE for September 1, seems to have an equally hearty contempt for facts in what he says about that great and remarkable man, Emanuel Swedenborg. He takes the position, in substance, that Swedenborg was a crazy dreamer, and to prove it makes a number of assertions which are not only not true, but which show that he has no real knowledge of Swedenborg's character and teachings. His whole communication is so rambling and incoherent that it ought not to produce any impression upon a reasonable mind; but, considering the prejudice against Swedenborg which prevails with the public, I think some of his misrepresentations ought not to pass without at least an attempt at correction.

"In a communication to Judge Edmonds, Swedenborg acknowledged that he wrote a great deal of nonsense while in the body." The only ground for the assertion is a book published by a Mr. Dexter, in which a certain "Swedenborg" is made to say a great many things, among them this one attributed by "W. C." to Emanuel Swedenborg. But "W. C." insists himself that spiritualism is all a "sham and a delusion," and has, therefore, no right to quote these rhapsodies of Dexter's as being what they claim to be. Besides, this "Swedenborg," apart from the difference in his name (for it cannot be considered a mere slip of the pen, since it occurs all through Dexter's book), is a very different man from Emanuel Swedenborg. His communications show that unmistakably. They are no more like the writings of the great Swede than President Johnson's after-dinner speeches are like Everett's orations.

Again: "Partial insanity must palliate, if not wholly excuse, his arrogant assumption of infallibility, his gossiping interviews with the Supreme Being." As to the insanity of Swedenborg, that is a slander which has been often repeated and as often refuted, and, not to take up space here, I simply refer to any of his biographies for the facts of the case. I will mention, however, as a proof of his entire sanity, that to the day of his death Swedenborg held a responsible office under the Swedish government, and enjoyed the esteem and confidence of the king and his cabinet. His "arrogant assumption of infallibility" is equally imaginary. He does, indeed, claim that he was divinely illumined, while reading the Word, to perceive its real meaning and draw from it true doctrine; but he proves that doctrine from the Word itself, and asks for no personal respect whatever. Nor is there any record in his writings of interviews, "gossipy" or otherwise, with the Supreme Being. The only thing approaching to it is his account of the appearance of the Lord to him at the commencement of his illumination; but then he only recounts a few brief words which he heard addressed to himself.

Nor did Swedenborg "form certain theological opinions, and when they took form in dreams suppose that his 'spiritual eyes' were opened." It is a matter of fact that he was devoted to the natural sciences alone throughout the whole of his early life, and when his "spiritual eyes" were opened, he had never read or written on theological subjects at all. He did not even know Hebrew, but set to work to acquire it afterward. The doctrines he teaches were the result, not the cause, of his intromission into the spiritual world. As to whether his views are or are not "far behind the present age," that is, of course, a matter of opinion; but I venture to say that "W. C." could not for his life give an intelligible account of what those views really are. I have studied Swedenborg for eighteen years myself, and I maintain that his teachings are still immeasurably beyond even the most advanced "liberal Christianity" in profundity, consistency, and harmony with the facts of creation—in short, that they are true.

"W. C." also connects the dreadful odors of the hells described by Swedenborg with his vicinity to a Dutch kitchen. Now Swedenborg's spiritual experiences were had, for the most part, not in Holland, or Germany even, but in Sweden, and not near a kitchen, but in a summer house which stood alone in the midst of a garden. "W. C.'s" theory contradicts these facts, to be sure, but which should give way I leave you to decide.

These few points are sufficient to show "W. C.'s" incompetency to write against the claims of Swedenborg to actual intercourse with the spiritual world, and I will not trespass upon your space with my argument upon the subject. I will only say that there are many thousands of intelligent, well-educated people in this country and in England who have examined it carefully, and have come to the conclusion that Swedenborg was, as he said he was, a divinely prepared instrument for the communication to mankind of true religious doctrine. When "W. C." shall have given the matter the same examination, he will probably find that it cannot be disposed of quite as easily as he imagines, and that there are "more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in his philosophy." Yours respectfully,

T. H.

NEW YORK, September 1, 1866.

IS THE ASTOR LIBRARY MISMANAGED?

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ROUND TABLE:

DEAR SIR: Will you not call the attention of the trustees of the Astor Library to the manner in which the usefulness of that noble institution is impaired through the want of a supplement to the catalogue, as well as of an *index raisonné* to the entire collection? And why is it that a manuscript catalogue of the additions has never been accessible to students? Surely the

labor attending the latter would be most trifling, considering the daily leisure (*repose*?) which is manifestly the lot of each of the librarians.

This obstinate mode of conducting the affairs of the library renders all recent purchases (extending back for some years) wholly useless, and must be unknown to Mr. Wm. B. Astor, who has so munificently increased the endowment bequeathed by his father. Please ventilate this subject and much oblige

AN IGNORANT IRISHMAN.

BISHOP COXE.

WE are requested to publish the following explanation:

Bishop Coxe, of Western New York, who has been supposed by *The Mobile Advertiser* and others to be the correspondent of THE ROUND TABLE of July 14th, is not the Mr. A. C. Coxe whose name appears with a communication of that date, respecting certain lines about Balaklava.

SEA-FOAM.

THE Sun is a golden goblet,
Uplung by the reveler, Day—
How the red wine glows and sparkles
As he reels on his bacchanal way!

And the mermaids rise, to greet him,
Up from their coral caves,
And they chant him a chant of welcome
That sounds like the plash of the waves.

They leave the mermen lonely,
Far down in their dim sea-hall,
And they fawn at the feet of the fair young Day,
Those fond mermaids all.

Their passionate, pale faces
Are upturned pleadingly,
And their shining tresses fall and rise,
Wreathed with the foam of the sea.

But wearied of wine and wassail,
The Reveler sinks to sleep,
And the wine from the falling goblet
Pours purple over the deep!

And lo! those sad mermaids
Shriek wildly in despair,
And dash white breasts on the cruel rocks
Among the breakers there.

Then up the mermen swarming
Laugh loud in scornful glee,
And drag the shining corpses
Far out along the sea.

Their passionless, pale faces
Are upturned mournfully,
And their trailing tresses fall and rise,
Floating like foam on the sea.

REVIEWS.

DA COSTA'S MEDICAL DIAGNOSIS.*

THE multiplicity of books on medical subjects, many of them being only compilations from the works of others, and hence of little value to the student or practitioner, throws a shade of doubt over most new medical treatises; but when we find a work which is really worthy of notice, a solid contribution to medical knowledge and evidently the result of personal observation in the hospital or by the bedside, we take it up for perusal with more than ordinary interest. Such a work is Dr. Da Costa's *Medical Diagnosis*.

The study of diagnosis is perhaps the most important in the whole field of medical research, for to treat a disease with any certainty, it is obviously necessary to know the nature and character of the disease itself. The days of empiricism, when physicians prescribed in the dark, or made their treatment square with some absurd or fanciful theory, have now passed away, and medicine, freed from the tyranny of sects and schools, has taken its proper position as a rational science. Homeopathy, hydropathy, allopathy, and a host of other schools have almost ceased to exist except in name, for but few of those who even honestly profess to practice according to the tenets of the

* *Medical Diagnosis, with Special Reference to Practical Medicine. A Guide to the Knowledge and Discrimination of Disease. By J. M. Da Costa, M.D., Lecturer on Clinical Medicine, and Physician to the Pennsylvania Hospital; Fellow of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia, etc., etc. Illustrated with numerous Engravings. Second edition. 1 vol. 8vo. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co. 1866.*

various bygone sects really do so. Day by day veneration for the founders of schools grows less, and even time-honored authorities have lost the magic power which the very mention of their names once exerted over the faculty. It is true that, to a great degree, sectarianism has given place to a sort of eclecticism, or rather syncretism, but only among men too slothful to study or too skeptical to understand that which they are taught.

The science of medicine, then, freed from the trammels of human authority, has indeed become catholic, and the physician who loves his profession and the welfare of his fellow-men is truly a priest in the temple of Hygeia. Therefore, while the man who is in earnest does not despise the teachings of the past or the experience of others, he must now search for truth himself. Dr. Da Costa expresses this idea better than we can; he says:

"No one aspiring to become a skillful observer can trust exclusively to the light reflected from the writings of others; he must carry the torch in his own hands, and himself look into every recess. . . . There are in almost every affection some symptoms which can hardly escape the merest beginner; but also some which do not appear on the surface, and which tax the skill of the experienced physician to find. And it is especially in this search after hidden signs that medical information as well as cultivated tact is demanded. Now, to recognize the manifestations of disease, whether they are or are not readily perceptible, we have to employ our eyes and ears, our sense of touch and of smell. Formerly we could go no further than these senses unassisted would carry us. But science has lent its aid, and furnished means by the help of which we can detect clearly what before we could not detect at all, or of what, at best, we only caught a glimpse. We now possess instruments by which we ascertain with accuracy the size of organs and their play. . . . And chemistry, with its marvelous teachings, is rendering our knowledge of many morbid states admirably and amazingly complete. Then the sagacity of modern times has taught us to enlist the sense of hearing, and demonstrated how a disciplined ear may detect the workings of disease in cavities into which the eye cannot penetrate. The effect of all these improved methods of study has given an immense impetus to clinical research, and in this manner tends to lead to the construction of a solid groundwork of experience in contrast to the looseness and wild vagaries of former times. . . . Knowledge, and above all the exercise of the reasoning faculties, are now indispensable. The daily habit of investigating disease; a scrutinizing study of the anatomical lesions; chemistry, with its most searching analysis; the microscope, with the wonders it reveals—are of little use unless we have been taught the necessity of placing the morbid signs they lay bare in connection with each other, and of considering in individual cases their respective value. Were it otherwise, the science of diagnosis would be simply a matter of memory. . . . Nor is it reasoning on the ascertained facts alone that is required; the premises may be but probabilities; for, in truth, diagnosis deals at times with the logic of probabilities as much as with the logic of patent facts.

"Now we are greatly aided in appreciating the import of morbid signs, and in interpreting them correctly, by already existing knowledge. We look to landmarks which our predecessors have erected, and the gradually accumulated science of semiology, rightly employed, furnishes the clue to the discovery of the disease. Thus the stores which medicine has laboriously collected during centuries can be used with advantage by all, and exist for the good of all. But an acquaintance with semiology is far from being the sole guide to diagnosis, nor does it at once help to a recognition of the actual malady. There are few symptoms in themselves distinctive; and often a symptom may be due to one of several causes."

We wish that our space would permit us to give every one of the golden words in the introductory of our author, but we have quoted sufficient not only to show the importance of a correct study of diagnosis, but also that a physician must in our time be neither an empiric nor a routinist. His remarks about semiology are especially worthy of note, for many practitioners treat not the disease but the uncertain symptoms of it; and, indeed, one so-called school of medicine is based entirely on what it calls symptomatology. A practitioner of that sect will go into the sick room with a book of symptoms in his hand, and prescribe the specific remedy there recorded for the symptoms observed. This is evidently a mistaken course, for symptoms are not disease, but rather morbid manifestations, and unless one is well versed in anatomy, physiology, and their adjunct sciences, chemistry and pathology, he cannot read these signs with any degree of certitude; nor must he neglect the rational use of those aids which modern ingenuity has furnished. As well might one attempt the study of astronomy without the telescope as that of diagnosis without the aid of the thermometer, the esthesiometer, the laryngoscope, the stethoscope, or the microscope; the use of all these instruments, and

of many others also, Dr. Da Costa describes in detail.

Let us take, for example, a physician who knows nothing of the modern aids to diagnosis; unless he be a man of great experience or possesses extraordinary intuitive faculties, he will be most certainly misled. Let a young woman who suffers from uterine disease, anæmia, and perhaps rheumatism, go to him; the chances are that he may tell her that she has organic disease of the heart; she probably has palpitation, a blowing sound which is transmitted to the cardiac and subclavian arteries, a humming noise in the veins of the neck (which a medical officer of the U. S. navy once told us could never occur except when there was hypertrophy of the right ventricle of the heart); and various other symptoms masked and disguised by hysteria. Moreover, how difficult it is for one unaccustomed to diagnose heart diseases to distinguish the simulated symptoms of cardiac disease which may originate in disease of the kidney. These mistakes may, perhaps, be natural enough; but even though there may be a slight abnormal action of the valves, a hasty or irrational diagnosis may be productive of great injury to the patient, and cause much anxiety to his friends. We would, therefore, entreat our medical readers to ponder carefully, mark, learn, and inwardly digest what our author says about diseases of the chest.

But a careful study of diagnosis is not only necessary for the physician to know when medication is necessary, but it is also requisite so that he may know when to throw his physic to the dogs, and

"—minister to a mind diseased;
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow;
Raze out the written troubles of the brain;
And, with some sweet oblivious antidote,
Cleanse the stuff'd bosom of that perilous stuff
Which weighs upon the heart."

Frequently, if the medical man knows what he is about, he will see very clearly that no medicine at all should be given. Take, for example, a case of simple pneumonia; the less medicine prescribed the better it is for the patient, who needs nursing more than "doctor's stuff." The days when the intestinal canal was considered a drug-shop are gone by, and the lancet and the purge are rapidly falling into disrepute, if not into disuse. Medication is now based on scientific principles, and not according to humoralism, or any other "ism;" at least this is the fact among men who do not make their profession simply a matter of gain.

But to recur to our author. The first chapter of his book is devoted to the examination of patients, and we particularly commend it to all students and young practitioners, for it is the key-note of the whole work. The succeeding chapters treat of the diseases of the brain, spinal cord, upper air passages, chest, digestive organs, urinary organs, special diseases, etc., and the last chapter (xiii.) of poisons and parasites. We cannot review these in detail, but will take a passing glance at some of them.

Cholera, that fearful epidemic which is now discussed everywhere and by every one, which terrifies nearly all, and about which we all know so little, is fearfully and vividly described by Da Costa. We have seen all that he tells of, and more too, and we know that the horrors of the battle-field are as nothing compared with the heart-rending scenes of a cholera hospital. It has been our sad fortune to assist at several *post-mortem* examinations of those who have died of this disease, and we are sorry that Da Costa has not given a fuller description of *post-mortem* appearances. This is not the place to supply the apparent defect, but we will simply say that in all the autopsies we saw we found a complete breaking down of tissue, disorganization of the blood, hematoïdin crystals everywhere, even in the blood before death; the bladder generally empty and contracted, the blood corpuscles so spread that many of them could be distinguished separately. The bile, treated with Pettenkofer's test, showed no bile salts.

We do not regard cholera as a disease of substance, but of force; in other words, a poison more subtle, more fatal, than any organic poison yet discovered. From what we have seen we do not think that it is personally contagious; nor do we believe, as far as this disease is concerned, in the doctrine of *fomites*.

It may be communicated by individuals to others

provided they are, so to speak, pathologically *en rapport*, if the local conditions are favorable to the development of the disease. Or again, atmospheric causes, together with favorable local conditions, may develop it; but we do not think that it can be developed spontaneously in this country. Every physician who has an opportunity to make a full and thorough autopsy of those of his patients who die of cholera should never neglect it, for by so doing he renders a service not only to the profession, but to humanity. The types of the disease are so various in different countries and at different times, and also even in individual cases, perhaps from their previous abnormal conditions, that these examinations cannot fail to be productive of results the benefit of which is incalculable.

We pass from a topic whose perils seem happily terminated in our community for at least the present year, to refer to one other disease of special interest to our Christian friends—trichiniasis. This disease is the result of a parasite which is now known to be of not unfrequent occurrence in the muscles of man. It was discovered by Owen in 1835, in human muscles taken from the dissecting room, and was named by him, as it was as fine as a hair and always coiled up in a more or less spiral line, *trichina spiralis*. The same parasite was subsequently found in animals, as by Leidy in the animal which of all others it most infests—the pig.

These parasites were at first considered harmless, for they were only detected in their cysts; and as these cysts became after a certain period filled with a calcareous deposit which killed the trichinæ, their presence in the human body was looked upon as a curiosity until 1860, when Zenker proved by a series of splendid observations that the trichinæ may exist free in the muscles of men, that it is only after some time that they are encapsuled, and that they are the cause of what may be a very fatal disease. The first case was that of a servant girl, who died in the hospital at Dresden with symptoms like those of typhoid fever. She, together with several members of the family in which she lived, and the butcher who had killed the pigs, had eaten their meat in a raw state, and soon after had been taken ill. At the autopsy her muscles were found to be full of trichinæ which were not yet encapsuled. One of the hams and some of the sausages, portions of which she had eaten, contained numerous encysted trichinæ. Thus the connection between the symptoms and their originating cause was clearly traced. It was soon verified by other observations; and it has since been well understood that the cases previously examined were cured cases, which had falsely given rise to the belief of the supposed innocuous character of the parasite, and that in the trichina disease, or *trichiniasis*, we find one of the most dangerous maladies to which the human frame is liable; so dangerous that whole families have died from its effects amid great sufferings, and that in the small village of Hedersleden, of 2,000 inhabitants, 300 were affected, of whom 80 have died. The trichina is incapable of generation except in the intestines, where it attains its full sexual maturity within two days, when a single female trichina may give birth to two thousand embryos, which find their way to the muscles, but those that have been swallowed never pass beyond the intestine. This disease has not been confined to Europe, but has also appeared in this country, and it is estimated that about one in fifty of American hogs contain trichinæ in their muscles. The treatment of this dreadful malady is at present very uncertain. Dr. Da Costa advises purgatives, calomel in scruple doses, and iron to relieve the œdema dependent on anæmia, which comes on at a late stage, or during recovery.

We have seldom examined an American medical work with such unalloyed satisfaction as the one before us; and criticism is difficult where there is so much to commend and so little to condemn. We may fairly say that this offering to medical science will place the name of Dr. Da Costa among the honored roll of those who have done a good work to their profession and a solid service to humanity. The second edition is in certain respects an improvement upon the first, and the book is gotten up in a style which reflects credit on the publishers. The typog-

raphy is excellent, and the plates are highly instructive and really beautiful in execution as well as in design.

VENETIAN LIFE.*

MR. HOWELLS had gained some literary reputation from his contributions in prose and verse to the periodicals, when he received from President Lincoln the appointment of consul to Venice, and thither he proceeded in the early days of the rebellion, and for three years performed his official duties at that post, finding leisure meanwhile to pursue his studies of the language, the people, and their literature and history, and to undertake the volume which is now before us. One year he passed in bachelor lodgings and two in housekeeping, having taken to himself a wife, as the book informs us, and found the alliance the portal to ways of housekeeping without which we should have missed some pleasant episodes and learned doubtless, through him, much less of the inner life of the Venetians. The book written on his way home after his consular experience was done, he contracted for its publication in England, where it was printed and given to the public long enough since for the press of that country to have pronounced upon its merits, and to have shown that they can treat with candor and praise a work that has really not a few good points about it. The commendation that *Venetian Life* received at their hands was in spite of the many errors that fell out from very neglectful proof-reading in the English printing office, when the author was too far distant to exercise any supervision. An edition was some months since brought over to this country, struck off from these English plates, but it has not been given the public without much vexatious delay and expense to the author in the canceling of many pages to bring the accuracy of the types up to the standard, which, strange to say, we set for ourselves in this country considerably higher than with them, however we may fall short in the finer mechanism of the art. So far we have a gain in the delay beyond the present enjoyment of the foreign critics; and the book seems to us one well worth waiting for.

The author in one place speaks of his dread lest his pen may now and then trip in the tatters of the threadbare theme—a precautionary instinct, doubtless, that has saved his readers some disgust. There are few themes so seductive to those that are afflicted with the itch of literary creation as that of describing foreign experiences, whether of travel or sojourn; and this very potential excess is with critical minds a prejudice at first sight against any attempt of the kind. And of all themes Italy has been most fatal to the novice and most trying to the adept. The one reproduces Murray with abundant illustrations of all sorts, relevant and irrelevant. The other is dogmatic, perhaps, or recondite and too encyclopediac. Mr. Howells has hit the happy medium, and among the mass of books on Italy, of which we have had not a few good ones, each in its peculiar line, within ten or fifteen years, there seems to us not one which has so eminently told its story well, and been made up in its component parts more satisfactorily and with less presumption—the author confining himself to what he knows, without trenching on what he might know but does not.

We owe, before this, three of the best books on Italy to Americans. Mr. Hillard made a valuable guide-book and index of opinions, and no one will regret making his *Six Months in Italy* a companion of their travels in that country. It was written and planned with scholarly taste and critical appreciation; but we cannot but feel on using it (we write advisedly, and do not say *reading* it) that it had been manufactured—a cement of his own with bits of precious things inlaid, and all polished to a surface by his own elaste perceptions. Mr. Story's book on Rome is a pleasant one—the gleanings of a resident rather than a sight-seer; and Mr. Norton's *Studies* are those of a student and one open to intellectual impressions of all kinds, but a little too recondite to suit the popular taste, while it is charming to the cultivated one.

We hold that *Venetian Life* does not stand in the

shade among this notable trio; and, notwithstanding certain tricks of style, that its writing is upon the whole purer than is often found. The author has now and then a fancy for reduplicating some favorite word, like *alien*, for instance, or of intensifying an adjective by repeating it after a comma, in the fashion of old ladies, who think it a subdued sort of emphatic utterance; and now and then there is something like a provincial habit in the choice of word, as when he describes people as "*immensely* happy." Altogether his most glaring fault—if we must class under so decided a term what is, notwithstanding, by no means graceless—we must consider a profuseness of expletives, that perhaps over exact habits of our own may prevent our accounting as desirable as we ought.

Mr. Howells seemingly went to Venice with some prepossessions in favor of that ideal Venice which poets, novelists, historians, and travel-mongers have fashioned apart from the truth. He was not long in making his discovery of this spurious sentimentalism and what not, and does not allow his readers to fall into the error while under his guidance. He puts Byron, the weird magician of these baseless visions, behind him, as he would the satanic magician of all. The Venice he saw was a realistic Venice; but not, for all that, rigid in outline or distasteful in aspect. He loved it himself despite the hard things he had to say of it; and in bringing his recital to a close he very gracefully adds a counterpoise to any unjust impression his readers may have got from his commentaries. "It is a doubt," he says, "which must force itself upon any fair and temperate man who attempts to describe another people's life and character; and I confess that it troubles me so sorely now, at the end of my work, that I would fain pray the gentle reader to believe much more good and much less evil of the Venetians than I have said."

Winter or summer, daybreak or midday, on the Grand Canal or in its palaces, in café, theater, or opera, threading the filthy lanes of the Ghetto or vacationing among the islands, Mr. Howells found Venice and its life a theme for constant studies, which the reader will find he improved well. "I was resolved," he says, "in writing this book to tell what I had found most books of travel very slow to tell—as much as possible of the every-day life of a people whose habits are so different from our own; endeavoring to develop a just notion of their character not only from the show-traits which strangers are most likely to see, but also from experience of such things as strangers are most likely to miss. The absolute want of society of my own nation in Venice would have thrown me upon study of the people for my amusement, even if I had cared to learn nothing of them; and the necessity of an economical *ménage* would have caused me to live at Venice in the frugal Venetian fashion, even if I had been disposed to remain a foreigner in everything." Hence his chapter on *Housekeeping in Venice*, and all its correlative experiences, is not the least interesting part of his book, and which he sums up in a manner quite satisfactory to stay-at-home people when he says that with nearly everything in Italy you pay about the same price for half the worth and comfort that you get in America. Speaking of tenements in particular, he adds that in Venice even discomfort and ruin have their price, and the tumble-down is patched up and sold at rates astonishing to innocent strangers who come from countries in good repair where the tumble-down is worth nothing.

To write of Venice and not to be dogmatic upon its art is something new; and Mr. Howells has the modesty to distrust all his own predilections in this way, and says but little of the subject, and that little candidly and cautiously. Ruskin he found a great help, of course, and he is willing to acknowledge it, and to call him, after all, the greatest critic of art; but it is a qualified admiration that does not blind him to Ruskin's great, and sometimes absurd, faults. Of art critics in general he seems to have a poor opinion, finding that, beyond a few loose general principles, they have few points of agreement, and the matter is not more easily disposed of if one turns from art critics to artists themselves. All this prompted him to refrain from lumbering his pages with descriptions or speculations which would be idle to most readers, he concludes, even if he were a far wiser judge of art than he

affects to be. As to his own preferences, he informs us that while he wondered at the greatness of some pictures and tried to wonder at the greatness of others, the only pictures that gave him genuine and hearty pleasure were those of Bellini, Carpaccio, and a few others of that school and time.

We part from this record of Venetian life with the feeling that we have had to do with a genuine book and not a compilation; something that grew out of the author's mind and with it—the fructification of his experience—which is what we can say of but few books that come before us.

LIBRARY TABLE.

In Vinculis; or, The Prisoner of War. Being the Experience of a Rebel in Two Federal Pens. By A. M. Keiley, a Virginia Confederate. New York: Blelock & Co. 1866.—Of a class of books which should never have been written, *In Vinculis* has an apology that cannot be made for most of the inflammatory war books that have been published as if with a desire of preventing any reconciliation of the recent antagonists. A man who has been defeated, overwhelmed by numbers after a brave resistance, may be pardoned for protesting against the treatment of his assailants, even if his statement of the case is too strenuous for credibility; but there is something of a meanness beyond excuse in the conduct of those who, keeping carefully on the outskirts of the fight, ostentatiously proclaim their attachment to the winning side and tauntingly exhibit a vindictive hatred for the conquered foe. The latter spirit is that in which so many have written who could have afforded to be charitable that we cannot be surprised that the other side should be stung into the utterance of rejoinders even more unseemly and objectionable.

Mr. Keiley admits that the publication of his book is designed as a counterblast to what he considers false and unjust statements respecting the conduct of the secession leaders. He himself states the objection made, "that no good can come of such disclosures—that nothing but reproach to the American name can follow them—that such recriminations can only postpone the day of peace;" and answers it, frankly at least, by saying that "the southern people can be expected to have little interest in the American name while they are denied American privileges, and we shall very contentedly see the American name suffer any reproach that truth can bring upon it." After this it is impossible to look for anything but intense animosity and a sustained effort to place the men and measures of the Union cause in as disagreeable a light as may be.

The book is so evidently the work of a man in a passion, of one who writes not to narrate but to gratify revenge, that it loses all verisimilitude. What trust, for instance, can be reposed in a man who, after inveighing against the hard-heartedness of the Yankees in refusing to permit a prisoner to visit his house to take leave of his family, evinces such brutal malevolence as the following passage indicates?

"At this point I had the satisfaction of seeing a Yank, whose haste to destroy our guns was so great that he would not take time to withdraw the load, blow a very ugly hole in his thigh—an accident whereon his Yankee-ship is probably moralizing to this hour."

Its entire want of moderation frustrates the very end for which the book was written—that of showing cruel treatment and neglect in our military prisons. The two camps in which the writer was confined were at Point Lookout and Elmira. From his own description it appears that money was so plenty among the prisoners that gambling was carried on from morning to night, and that a restaurant in the camp was well supported, while the rations were sufficiently abundant to permit "hard tack" to become a generally adopted circulating medium. At Point Lookout tents were furnished to all the prisoners, while wooden houses were within the possibilities for such as chose to build for themselves, and at Elmira wooden barracks were supplied. At the former camp, too, they had undisputed access to all those pleasures of bathing which before the war made that place a favorite southern summer resort, and which have just induced a company to buy the spot from the government for the erection of hotels. The only valid complaint here, indeed, is that the water was bad. At Elmira, among

* *Venetian Life*. By William D. Howells. New York: Hurd & Houghton. 1866. 16mo, 360 pp.

the grievances is seriously enumerated the fact that stands were erected to overlook the fence around the camp, and that there were people vulgar enough to pay the enterprising proprietors for the enjoyment of the show. He admits that many officers were gentlemanly, courteous, and considerate, but is bitter in his accusations against others of truculence, rapacity, and inefficiency—which, we take it, are circumstances so inherent in human nature as to be almost inevitable in any army so unexpectedly called into being as were those to which our civil war gave rise.

So far as it is an arraignment of the conduct of the North toward its prisoners, Mr. Keiley's book can only be regarded as an argument for those he would impugn. Its literary style is occasionally enlivened by something like the labored smartness of country newspapers, composed partly of cheap puns, chiefly of an inflated use of words where an irredeemably coarse phrase is disguised under a still more offensive periphrasis, as, for instance:

"Our venerable muskets were not worth a tinker's imprecation at longer range than a hundred yards, and we were compelled, *perforce*, to watch the preparations for our capture or slaughter, much after the fashion that a rational turtle may be presumed to contemplate the preliminaries of a civic dinner in London."

"This occasioned another check, and provoked an artillery response, which continued for twenty minutes, with about the effect currently attributed to sacred melodies chanted in the hearing of a certain useful hybrid, deceased."

For the aim and tone of the book there are the excuses to which we have before alluded. For its invariable vulgarity and its numerous statements which are simply falsehoods, there can be none. It can only appear in a favorable light when contrasted with those books which, advancing the same line of argument in behalf of the other side, shield their vindictiveness under a threadbare cant about disagreeable duty performed from high moral considerations. Mr. Keiley has the advantage over these of making no pretense to conceal the fact that he is sincerely actuated by pure animal propensities of spiteful hatred.

Sketches of Russian Life Before and During the Emancipation of the Serfs. Edited by Henry Morley, Professor of English Literature in University College, London. London: Chapman & Hall; Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co. 1866.—In his preface Prof. Morley explains as to the authorship of the book that its manuscript was placed in his hands by a friend who vouched for its writer as "a gentleman who knew more than most travelers of Russian life; not only because he had lived long in Russia, and in its remote parts as much as in the capital, but chiefly because he knew how to observe and seize at once the point of any character or incident." The materials thus furnished were condensed and published in *All the Year Round*, and "in this volume they are reprinted by permission, with substantial additions from papers since furnished by the author, who is still in Russia."

The writer's quickness of perception is not overrated, and is only equalled by his graphic delineation of the salient features of Russian peasant life and those phases of misgovernment and official imbecility or corruption with which the foreigner is brought in contact. The same subject was handled, some ten years ago, by Mr. George Augustus Sala, in his *Journey Due North*, first published, we believe, in a London periodical. But Mr. Sala, as he says of himself, is "of the streets, and streety;" and while he gave a good idea of city life, exposed the hollowness and sham underlying the immense government machine that overshadows the whole land, caught unerringly at whatever was ludicrous or incongruous, and dwelt upon the utter degradation of the entire community, his book left a perception that it was calculated rather to impress the reader with the cleverness of the correspondent than to enlighten him materially as to the actual condition of Russia. Count De Gurowski, a Polish exile, also before the emancipation, wrote a book entitled *Russia As It Is*, where there is an evident endeavor to fulfill the promise of the title; but the work is that of a political philosopher who deals with the political and social institutions as they exist by theory, and, though he can in no sense be said to regard things *en couleur de rose*, his book conveys little idea of a barbarism whose continued existence is almost incomprehensible.

Sketches of Russian Life gives a much more vivid and reliable representation of the real state of things than could be imparted either by a tourist who had devoted a few weeks to running over an immense empire, or by a man whose life had been so spent among them as to blunt his perception of their enormity. The writer has lived in portions of the realm not frequently penetrated by foreigners. He has seen beneath the surface-gloss, which is said only to overlie the Tartar substratum. His uncolored narration of incidents as they came under his own cognizance fully corroborates former descriptions of Russian character and manners, which seem to need reiterated examples to establish their credibility. His experiences make possible of realization the inbred savageness of all Russia—the blackguard brutality of the aristocracy, tinctured only by frivolity; the dense moral and intellectual darkness of the peasantry, whom long oppression and misgovernment seem to have cowed and to have perfected in all the vices of savages with none of their ameliorating virtues; the gross and debauched priesthood; the irresponsibility, rapacity, insolence, and arbitrary power of the police and other officials, who extort and misgovern with entire impunity. On the latter point we have this experience of our author in a police court:

"What are you wanting here, brother?" I said to a decent-looking man.

"You are an Englishman. I will tell you. You see that man in the blue caftan?"

"Yes."

"Well, my brother and I caught him stealing from my premises six months ago. He had two horses with him for carting my goods off, and, as we caught him in the act, we gave him and the horses up to the police."

"Well, I said, 'that is a plain case easily settled.'"

"God help me! I thought so too. But you see they have been sending for my brother and me, on one pretense or another, from our village, fifteen versts away, every week for six months, writing papers and giving evidence, until I have cause to believe that the affair itself must have been a dream. I am so tired out I cannot go on telling the truth any longer. Besides, it's of no use. Last week my brother saw the very same two horses in the police-master's carriage."

"Ah! I see; the thief is free at the cost of two good horses. And what do you do now? That paper is—"

"A statement that the whole thing must have been a dream and delusion on the part of my brother and myself, and that we have nobody to accuse. I wish we were quit of the business." And he crossed himself.

"Why do you cry, my dear mother, and what is your petition about?" I said to a poor woman.

"Oh, my lord, I have been cheated. I am a widow; my husband died three months ago. He bought the little house and garden twelve months before that, and paid two hundred roubles—all the money except twenty roubles. The police-master signed the deed of sale for it, but has forgotten all about it. The man that sold the place denies the selling and the paying. I and my children are turned out, and this is the fourth petition I have presented. I have no money to give his excellency, to make him remember."

"Poor woman! The only appeal from official rapacity is to the Emperor; his ears are, indeed, never shut to the lowliest of his subjects; but how can a poor woman tramp six hundred miles of Russian road to sue for justice?"

Of the barbarism of even the nobility in their conduct toward the serfs we have this instance, which, of course, occurred before emancipation, the lady mistress, it should be observed, being a baroness:

"The peasants seemed as if they had just risen from consuming fever. They were lean, and wan, and baggy, with their hair matted, their poor clothing tattered, and their faces fixed in sullen discontent. The lady, busy among her 'souls,' did not appear to notice our approach. She was in too great a passion to attend to anything but the outpouring of her wrath."

"Dogs! sons and daughters of dogs! Is this the service you pay your baron? Pigs and swine! Is this a time to come to your work? Rats and vermin! You should have been here at four o'clock, and now it is ten. Defilement of mothers! I will have every one of you whipped. And you, starost, who ought to be an example, are the worst of the whole pack of thieves. You came here at this hour with seventeen souls, when you ought to have had forty here at four o'clock to thrash and put that rye away. Devils you all are! If my brother were well, he would punish you like sons and daughters of dogs, as you are!"

"The old starost, quite unconcerned under all this abuse, merely shrugged his shoulders until they reached his ears, and held out his two hands from his sides with each finger as far separate from its neighbor as possible. If any one will put himself in this posture, and stare fixedly before him until his eyes are glassy, he will have achieved the universal deprecatory careless shrug of Russia."

The management of manufactories, in which a large portion of the Russian population is employed, is based upon the principle "no stick, no work," and the stick is used remorselessly:

"One day I met the starosta leading four women through the yard."

"Tell me, Evan Evanovitch, what are you going to do with these?"

"He handed me a paper, and I read, 'Give these four (here followed the names) thirty blows each,' signed by the director."

"This did not surprise me; but it may surprise my readers that a magistrate would, without any trial or investigation—without even knowing the faults for which these people were sent—execute an order of this character."

"Mother, I said to one of the women, 'what have you done to deserve this?'"

"God knows; the master found me asleep."

"And what have you done?" I said to another.

"I was suckling my little one, and my machine was standing."

"And you?" to a young woman.

"Oh, he knows very well I am not in the fault; but I would not go into his small room last night with him."

"Have you been there before with him?"

"O yes, he takes any of us; he is a pig. I won't go any more, for I am to be married next week."

"And what is your fault?" I said to the fourth, an old withered hag.

"It was nothing. I only took a little yarn—only a little to knit with, you know. What's to be done?"

"For faults such as these the poor creatures were thrashed, by order of a foreigner, who for a few roubles to the needy stanavog could, without judge or jury, get all the hands in his mill lashed and beaten, to suit his caprice or minister to his amusement, at any time."

Sketches of Russian Life is a model book of travels, and affords evidently a faithful as well as an amusing and graphic view of the provincial districts. We hope its writer will fulfill his concluding promise and record, as his continued residence among the Russians will enable him to do, the effects of the extinction of serfdom.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

- D. APPLETON & Co., New York.—Recent British Philosophy. By David Mason. Pp. 335. 1866.
Histoire de Jules César. Par S. M. I. Napoléon III. Tome deuxième. Pp. 552. 1866.
Discourses of Redemption. By Rev. Stuart Robinson. Pp. 488. 1866.
D. VAN NOSTRAND, New York.—A Treatise on the Origin, Nature, Prevention, and Treatment of Asiatic Cholera. By John C. Peters, M. D. Pp. 163. 1866.
AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY, New York.—The Crisis of Italy. By Rev. Dr. Wylie. 1866.
Twenty Years Among the Colporteurs. By Rev. Charles Peabody. Pp. 91. 1866.

PAMPHLETS, ETC.

- G. P. PUTNAM: HURD & HOUGHTON, New York.—Spanish Papers and other Miscellaneous, hitherto unpublished or uncollected. By Washington Irving. Arranged and edited by Pierre M. Irving. (Adv. sheet.) 2 vols. Pp. xv, 466; 487. 1866.
AMERICAN NEWS CO., New York.—Mr. Winkfield: A Novel. Pp. 160. 1866.
NEW YORK.—Mexico, and the Solidarity of Nations. By Gen. G. Cluseret. Pp. 109. 1866.
ADAMS & ELLIS, Rochester, N. Y.—The Relation of the Church and the Bible. By E. G. Robinson. Pp. 36. 1866.

We have also received the following magazines for September: The Christian Examiner, The Catholic World, The Eclectic Magazine, The Medical Record, The Galaxy, Harper's Magazine, Benedict's Railroad and Steamboat Time Tables—New York; The Church Monthly, The Atlantic Monthly, Our Young Folks—Boston; The American Exchange and Review—Philadelphia; The American Farmer—Baltimore; The Ladies' Repository—Cincinnati; The Crescent Monthly—New Orleans; also, The Methodist Centenary Magazine—Pittsburg.

LITERARIANA.

AMERICAN.

WE have to record this week the death of that veteran poet and man of letters, the Rev. John Pierpont, who was found dead in his bed at Medford, Massachusetts, on the morning of the 27th of August. He was born on the 6th of April, 1785, in the town of Litchfield, Connecticut, or rather in a portion of the town which was formerly known as "Litchfield South Farms," and which now constitutes the town of Morris. His father, the Rev. James Pierpont, was the second minister of New Haven and a founder of Yale College, which John entered in his youth, completing his course in his nineteenth year. The next four years he passed as a private tutor in the family of Col. William Alston, of South Carolina, after which he returned to Connecticut and studied law in the well-known school of his native town. Admitted to practice, he settled at Newburyport, Mass., but was not successful as a lawyer, the war of 1812 interfering with his prospects. He next turned his attention to business, of what nature we are not told, both in Boston and in Baltimore, and again was unsuccessful. An anecdote is related of him in connection with his failure in the latter city, in 1816, to the effect that he at once removed from the house in which he had been living, and took a lodging with his wife and children in a single apartment, with no provision even for a single day. His partner found him with difficulty, and reminded him that there were funds in the possession of the firm which the creditors would expect them to live upon until the business of the firm should be settled. "Not a dollar of it will I touch," said the honest poet, "until it is distributed by the proper authorities." He was almost without

food for three days, during which time he wrote his *Airs from Palestine*, which he carried to a publisher, who gave him five hundred dollars for it. This incident, which was narrated in the sermon preached at his funeral, appears to us rather apocryphal, at least as regards the composition of the poem in question at that time, the common opinion being that it was written for a charity concert. However this may be, Mr. Pierpont returned to the North, and in 1818 entered the Cambridge divinity school. The next year he was ordained minister of the Hollis Street Unitarian church, a situation which he held for twenty-five years, the latter part of the time with no great pleasure or profit, we should judge, either to himself or his congregation. The trouble lay in the stand which he took in favor of the temperance cause, when it was unpopular, particularly so with a portion of the members of his church whose interests were in the liquor trade. His friends remonstrated with him on his course, but he declared that he would stand in a free pulpit, or in none. There was a struggle between the pastor and his flock; they endeavored to remove him, and withheld his salary, so that he was compelled for a time to accept the assistance of his friends. The matter was carried into the Supreme Court, which finally gave its decision in his favor; then, having won the victory, he resigned his charge, and, in 1845, became the first pastor of the Unitarian church of Troy, New York. He had previously, however, in 1836-7, visited Europe and Palestine, but we are not aware that he published anything in relation to his tour. In 1840 he published a collected edition of his poems in Boston. After residing four years in Troy he received a call to Medford, Massachusetts, where he remained till the breaking out of the war, when he sought Governor Andrew, who, at his urgent request, appointed him chaplain to the Twenty-second regiment. The exposure of camp life proving too much for his strength, he was compelled to resign his place, greatly to his regret. He was at once given a clerkship in the Treasury Department by Secretary Chase, his duties being a codification of the treasury laws—a task which he is said to have performed admirably, his labors comprising fourteen volumes, with an index. On completing this work he received another appointment, which he held until his death. Such, in brief, was the life of John Pierpont. Of his career as an author, further than we stated, we know but little, for so great is the demand upon us by the works of the day that we have no time to go back to our past literature, such as it is. In addition to the *Airs of Palestine*, which, we confess, we never have read, Mr. Pierpont wrote a long poem for a centennial celebration at Litchfield, and a large number of temperance songs and religious poems, besides war lyrics, none of which have lived, we take it, beyond the hour which called them forth. He was also a maker of school-books, one of which, *The American First Class Book*, is a model of its kind, and was very popular in New England some thirty years ago. As we have already intimated, however, we know next to nothing of Mr. Pierpont as a poet, the best poem of his which we have seen being a monody on the death of a child, beginning, "I cannot make him dead." It is unsafe to make predictions concerning cotemporary literature, but we venture to think that this simple and touching poem will be remembered a hundred years hence, and the memory of its author cherished and beloved by sorrowing fathers whose boys have been taken from them. The writing of one such lyric ought to be a lease of immortality.

MESSRS. HURD & Houghton are about to publish *Spanish Papers and other Miscellanies*, hitherto unpublished or uncollected, by the late Washington Irving. They make two handsome volumes of between four and five hundred pages each, the *Spanish Papers* filling the first. Three of them, *The Legend of Don Roderick*, *The Legend of the Subjugation of Spain*, and the *Legend of Count Julian and his Family*, were published in 1835 as No. 111 of the *Crayon Miscellany*; the remainder are now published for the first time. They are illustrative of the wars between the Spaniards and the Moors, which always had the greatest attraction to Irving. "These old Moresco-Spanish subjects," he says in one of his letters, "have a charm that makes me content to write about them at half-price. They have so much that is high-minded and chivalrous, and quaint and picturesque, and at times half comic, about them." The second volume is made up of scattered papers, beginning with the *Letters of Jonathan Oldstyle, Gent.*, which were written when Irving was a law-student and this great Babel of a city of ours had scarcely sixty-five thousand inhabitants. They were published in the *Morning Chronicle*, a daily paper started by his brother, Peter Irving, the first one appearing on the 15th of November, 1802, the fifth and last on the 11th of December, or rather the last as they are now arranged, the final four of the original series

being omitted in deference to the wishes of the writer when there was some talk of including them in his collected works. They are followed by eight biographical sketches, four of which are of naval celebrities, viz., Captain James Lawrence, Lieutenant Burrows, Commodore Perry, and Captain David Porter, the remainder being brief memoirs and reminiscences of Thomas Campbell, Washington Alston, Talma, and Margaret Miller Davidson. Twelve *Reviews and Miscellanies*, selected from *The Analectic Magazine*, a monthly periodical published in Philadelphia, and edited by Irving in 1813-14, *The North American*, *The London Quarterly*, and *The Knickerbocker*, close the volume and probably the series of Irving's works. They show all the graces of his style, but fail to convince us that criticism was his forte. A new portrait sees the light here for the first time, and an excellent one it is, being no less than a drawing made by Wilkie, at Seville in 1828. We are ignorant of the process by which it was engraved, but to our unpracticed eyes it appears a combination of mezzotint and stipple, the whole having the effect of an etching, and, we are certain, faithfully reproducing the original drawing, which seems to have been in india ink.

Messrs. Hurd & Houghton are also about to publish *Ballads, Lyrics, and Hymns*, by Alice Cary, a beautiful crown octavo of three hundred and thirty pages, with a life-like portrait, engraved on steel, and fifteen illustrations on wood. It contains about one hundred and fifty of Miss Cary's poems, selected, we presume, from a much larger number, the work of the last seven or eight years. They have all the characteristics of her genius, its freshness, simplicity, and impressibility, with some qualities not to be found in her earlier collections, the results of a wider experience, and, it may be, of profounder sufferings. We copy one of her lighter lyrics, which, carelessly written as it is, has a fine flavor in it:

IDLE.

I heard the gay spring coming,
I saw the clover blooming,
Red and white along the meadows—
Red and white along the streams;
I heard the blue-bird singing,
I saw the green grass springing,
All as I lay a-dreaming,
A-dreaming idle dreams.

I heard the plowman's whistle,
I saw the rough burr thistle
In the sharp teeth of the harrow—
Saw the summer's yellow gleams
In the walnuts, in the fennel,
In the mulleins, lined with flannel,
All as I lay a-dreaming,
A-dreaming idle dreams.

I felt the warm, bright weather;
Saw the harvest—saw them gather
Corn and millet, wheat and apples—
Saw the gray beams with their seams
Pressing wide, the bare-armed shearers,
The ruddy water-bearers,
All as I lay a-dreaming,
A-dreaming idle dreams.

The blue-bird and her nestling
Flew away: the leaves fell rustling,
The cold rain killed the roses,
The sun withdrew his beams;
No creature cared about me,
The world could do without me,
All as I lay a-dreaming,
A-dreaming idle dreams.

Of a higher mood is her dedication, *To the Spirit of Song*:

"O! ever true and comfortable mate,
For whom my love outwore the fleeting red
Of my young cheeks, nor did one jot abate,
I pray thee now, as by a dying bed,
Wait yet a little longer! Hear me tell
How much my will transcends my feeble powers;
As one with blind eyes feeling out in flowers
Their tender hues, or, with no skill to spell
His poor, poor name, but only makes his mark,
And guesses at the sunshine in the dark,
So have I been. A sense of things divine
Lying broad above the little things I know,
The while I made my poems for a sign
Of the great melodies I felt were true.
Pray thee accept my sad apology,
Sweet master, mending, as we go along,
My homely fortunes with a thread of song,
That all my years harmoniously may run:
Less by the tasks accomplished judging me,
Than by the better things I would have done.
I would not lose thy gracious company
Out of my house and heart for all the good
Besides that ever cometh to womanhood—
And this is much: I know what I resign;
But at that great price I would have thee mine."

It is not often that we receive so genuine and spirited a lyric as this:

BURIED.

Somewhere down in the sea,
Out of the rude world's harms,
Hid from you and from me
In the calmest of all calms.

Why weep for him? The waves,
Throbbing from shore to shore,
Will mourn above her graves
When we are here no more;

And roll along the sands
Her melancholy tales
Of wild, uplifted hands,
Split masts, and tatter'd sails.

Deep under blastful cloud
And lines of frothy reef
She weaves a seaweed-shroud
About him in her grief.

We cannot write his name
On any carven stone,
But his sleep is still the same,
And our lives as much alone.

Tho' never a pray'r was said,
And there fell no burial-sod,
We should still believe him dead
With the holiest rites of God.

And our eyes should never dim
While reverent lips can say:
"Our Father buried him
When he took his soul away."

EDGAR FAWCETT.

FOREIGN.

THE claim put forth by Arminius Vambéry, the Eastern traveler, that he was the first European since Marco Polo who had reached Samarcand, is about to be confuted, it is said, by the publication of an old German record, the work of a George Louis von — (the surname of the writer is not legible in the original manuscript), who traveled in Turkestan and passed on to Samarcand generations before Vambéry was born. The itinerary of this partly anonymous traveler, which will soon be issued in Paris, under the editorship of M. de Khanckoff, consists of forty folio pages, and the journey traced therein extends from Cashmere to Sarasan, across the Kirghiz steppes by Kasebgar Boior to the ice-plateau of Pamir, and thence to the desert land north of Syr Daria.

AMONG recent deaths may be mentioned that of the Rev. J. M. Neale, warden of Sackville College, East Grimstead, England, who died at the age of forty-nine. He was a voluminous author, the works by which he is best known being a *History of the Holy Eastern Church*, a *History of the Patriarchate of Alexandria*, and a *History of the Jansenist Church of Holland*. He wrote several High Church novels, and quite a library of children's books, besides publishing an expurgated edition of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, which Lord Macaulay criticised severely in *The Edinburgh Review*. His adaptations of old English church music are in general use in the English Protestant Church, and his translations of a series of hymns from St. Bernard of Morlaix are in most modern collections.

MISS BRADDON'S new magazine, *The Belgravia*, will start next month under very brilliant auspices. The lady has invited a large circle of eminent English litterateurs to assist her in her undertaking. The only American writer who, we are in a position to state, has received a similar invitation is Mr. Henry Sedley, one of the editors of THE ROUND TABLE.

DR. K. ELZE, of Dessau, a German editor of Shakespeare, writes a letter to *The Athenæum* concerning the number of corruptions of the text, for which he proposes emendations. He begins with the well-known passage in *Hamlet*—

"The dram of eale
Doth all the noble substance of a doubt
To his owne scandle,"

which he thinks is mended by this reading:

"The dram of evil
Doth all the noble substance often daub
To his owne scandal."

The lame line in this passage:

"For vae almost can change the stamp of nature,
And master the deull, or throwe him out
With wond'rous potency,"

he would change to

"And either usher the devil, or throw him out."

The fourth line in this passage is notoriously corrupt:

"The rabble call him lord;
And, as the world were now but to begin,
Antiquity forgot, custom not known,
The ratifiers and props of every word,
They cry, 'Choose we; Laertes shall be king!'"

"As no appropriate sense," says Dr. Elze, "can be made of 'the ratifiers and props of every word' (though, as far as I know, this is the unanimous reading of the old editions), Warburton has conjectured 'of every word,' Johnson 'of every weal,' and Tyrwhitt 'of every work.' None of these conjectures, however, is a real improvement on the text. I have no doubt that we should read 'of every worth,' which would at once remove all difficulty. As far as his worth is concerned, Laertes would

indeed be a proper person to be elected king. But the king is not to be chosen, as in the primeval times, for his worthiness alone; antiquity and custom come in for their share also; they are 'the ratifiers and props of every worth.'

MR. ROBERT BUCHANAN'S third venture, *London Poems*, has run the gauntlet of English criticism successfully, although it has not added materially to his reputation as a poet. It shows the same qualities as his *Idyls and Legends of Inverburn*, with more ease in the handling of the materials and a clearer insight into the sources of tragic power. The elements of which it is composed are for the most part stern and somber, as are the aspects of London life which Mr. Buchanan depicts, which are not those of St. James, but St. Giles and its neighborhood. The best of the *London Poems*—there are thirteen in all—is *Liz*, or the *London Idyl*, as Mr. Buchanan first called it, when he published it in *The Fortnightly Review*. It is a touching study on what we politely call the social evil. A fair sample of these poems of town-life is

THE BLIND LINNET.

I.
The sempstress's linnnet sings
At the window opposite me;
It feels the sun on its wings,
Though it cannot see.
Can a bird have thoughts? May be.

II.
The sempstress is sitting
High o'er the humming street,
The little blind linnnet is flitting
Between the sun and her seat.
All day long
She stitches wearily there,
And I know she is not young,
And I know she is not fair:
For I watch her head bent down
Throughout the dreary day,
And the thin, meek hair o' brown
Is threaded with silver gray;
And now and then with a start,
At the fluttering of her heart,
She lifts her eyes to the bird,
And I see in the dreary place
The gleam of a thin, white face,
And my heart is stirr'd.

III.
Loud and long
The linnnet pipes his song!
For he cannot see
The smoky street all round.
But loud in the sun sings he,
Though he hears but the murmurous sound;
For his poor, blind eyeballs blink,
While the yellow sunlights fall,
And he thinks (if a bird can think)
That he hears a waterfall,
Or the broad and beautiful river,
Washing fields of corn,
Flowing for ever
Through the woods where he was born;
And his voice grows stronger,
While he thinks that he is there,
And louder and longer
Falls his song on the dusky air.
And oft, in the gloaming still,
Perhaps (for who can tell?)
The musk and the muscatel,
That grow on the window sill,
Cheat him with their smell.

IV.
But the sempstress can see
How dark things be;
How black through the town
The stream is flowing;
And tears fall down
Upon her sewing.
So at times she tries,
When her trouble is stirr'd,
To close her eyes,
And be blind like the bird.
And thus, for a minute,
As sweet things seem,
As to the linnnet
Piping in his dream!
For she feels on her brow
The sunlight glowing,
And hears nought now
But a river flowing—
A broad and beautiful river,
Washing fields of corn,
Flowing for ever
Through the woods where she was born—
And a wild bird winging
Over her head, and singing!
And she can smell
The musk and the muscatel
That beside her grow,
And, unaware,
She murmurs an old air
That she used to know!

Mr. Buchanan dedicates his volume, which will soon be published here by Mr. Alexander Strahan, to William Hepworth Dixon, the editor of the *Athenaeum*, who, according to report, ought to be somewhere in this country

at present. Here is the opening paragraph of his dedication, which gives us a glimpse of his early poetical life:

"MY DEAR DIXON: This book is inscribed to you; and lest you should ask wherefore, I will refresh your memory. Seven years ago, when I was an ambitious lad in Scotland, and when the north-easter was blowing coldly on me, you sent me such good words as cheered and warmed me. You were one of two (the gentle, true, and far-seeing George Henry Lewes was the other) who first believed that I was fitted for noble efforts. Since then you have known me better, and abode by your first hope. Nor have you failed to exhibit the virtue, not possessed by one writer in a hundred, of daring to express publicly your confidence in an unacknowledged author."

MR. J. E. HILARY SKINNER, barrister-at-law, has recently published a volume of travel in the United States, under the title of *After the Storm; or, Jonathan and his Neighbors in 1865-6*, which seems to be a fair, as it certainly is an amusing, book. Mr. Skinner came over to see what we were like after the war, and to make a book about us, as is the fashion of his countrymen, who have a fashion of uniting the *utile* and the *dulce* when they visit foreign countries. He arrived at New York in July, 1865, and one of the first things which struck his attention was the number of young men whom he saw on the streets who had lost their limbs. The twentieth whom he encountered in a morning's walk gave him a glimpse of his history:

"We had a skirmish before St. Petersburg, and my leg was broken. It seemed as if it might have come right, but the surgeon whipped it off whilst I was asleep. . . . Surgeons are much like other folk, and want to hurry up their work. . . . There was a comrade of mine that had an idea he'd be wounded some day, and was fearful of losing his limbs without cause. He gave me fifty dollars to carry for him just before the big fight at the Wilderness. 'Now,' said he, 'if I get a hole knocked in my skin, you give the surgeon that's looking after me them fifty dollars, and beg him to save every bone if he can fix it.' I promised him, and then came the battle. My comrade was hit in the arm and leg. They took him to the rear, and it wasn't for several hours after that I could get leave to visit him. Five hundred dollars wouldn't have saved his limbs then, for they were both taken slick off. 'Wal, sir, you've been smart about it,' said I to the surgeon. 'Yes, sir,' said he, 'guess we have. Both sides uppermost with care won't do here. We've hard work to get through at any price.' And he was right, sir. The amount of arms and legs they had taken off was quite surprising."

It is difficult to avoid a smile at St. Petersburg. Mr. Skinner saw a good deal of the southern people in the course of his travels, and some of the best portions of his book are enlivened with accounts of their present transition state. Here is one:

"There was talk of bales and hogsheads in the saloon, as also of that all-important question, negro labor. One gentleman was positive that nothing but severe measures could keep the hands on a plantation. Another ex-slaveholder, who professed his willingness to accept what had been done as final, and to make the best of existing laws, told me how valuable preaching had been found in keeping the negroes steadily at work: 'Why, sir,' said he, 'long before this emancipation I knew a hard old sinner that was running a place with several hundred people on it, and he found punishing them seemed to do no good. Well, he bought a fiddler and got a dancing-room fixed up, so that every Saturday the niggers might have a ball. They're mad on dancing, and this fiddler made the hands more cheerful like, so as only a few of them would go off to the swamp. But that wasn't enough. The old man wanted his place to be perfect, so he bought a preacher—an ignorant colored man, you know, sir. Well, them darkies are death on preaching. The old man got a chapel fixed up for his pious nigger, and by G—, sir, he found his overseer might give them h—l before they'd run, with dancing and preaching going on together.' My informant paused; but as I felt by his manner that there was more to be heard, I muttered, 'Pray proceed,' or 'Your story interests me,' as do obliging theatrical characters when the hero is allowed a moment to recover his breath. 'Wal, there is more of it,' he said with marked emphasis; 'that old man would sometimes step in to hear the preacher himself. He was proud of owning a nigger that could keep it up just like a real minister, and, sir, one day the darky converted him. After that old massa would sit just as regular as Sambo to hear the preaching, and he swore if this one died there should be another bought, for it did them all good. By —, sir, it was a hard place, and they wanted some enjoyment, I can tell you.'"

Another glimpse of southern life and manners, and we have done with Mr. Skinner, whose work we commend to the notice of our publishers as a safe and profitable investment:

"From where K— lives, in a comfortable wooden house, mounted on wooden piers, it is not far to a doctor's office, a grog-shop, and a smithy. The three institutions thus classed together had each its share of patronage as I first beheld them; that is to say, each had a group of loafers collected before it—grave at the medical department, impatient at the smithy, and jovial at the grog shop. 'Hallo, mister, hold on there a minute!' was shouted from this last, as my footsteps, after lingering near the smithy, were turned toward K—'s abode, and two gentlemen of haggard appearance stalked up to me.

'In what can I oblige you, sir?' was my question to the wildest-looking of the pair. He hesitated, as though embarrassed, and doubting how to proceed; but his companion remarked huskily that they'd 'got to do it, so there was no use making a long speech.' I may have seemed surprised and inclined to refuse any further concession, for the wilder-looking man observed, with a grim smile, 'No offense, mister; only there's a treat depending on the size of your hat, and we're the committee to measure it.' 'Gentlemen,' I replied, handing them the property in question, 'Kench & Son would be proud to think they have astonished you.' The husky gentleman anathematized all hatters for the prices they were charging, whilst he of the wilder looks measured my hat with an air of triumph. They then muttered some indistinct thanks, and quitted me abruptly to make their report at the grog-shop door."

A COLLECTION of scandalous works has appeared openly in Brussels, and secretly at Paris, under the title of *The Exiles' Library*. They are characterized as profane, immoral, and politically violent, but full of genius—the brilliant poems and essays of Alfred de Musset, the daring verses of Bandelaire, and the bitter epigrams of Victor Hugo forming a portion of the series, of which a few copies have been received in England.

PERSONAL.

MR. CHARLES F. BROWNE (*Artemas Ward*) is said to have been kindly received by the literary world of London. He has been engaged on *Punch*, in which he is to have a series of articles entitled *Artemas Ward in London*, and which we hope will enliven that now rather dreary periodical. Mr. Browne was a valuable accession to *Vanity Fair* in its last days, and we don't see why he should not do well in *Punch*. His readings—meaning, we suppose, the lectures he went over to deliver—will not begin until October.

THE Hon. John Minor Botts, of Virginia, has in the press a volume entitled *The Great Rebellion: Its Secret History, Rise, Progress, and Disastrous Failure. The Political Life of the Author Vindicated*.

MR. BAYARD TAYLOR, who was in the city recently, is at his country seat in Chester county, engaged upon a translation of *Faust*.

MR. HERMAN MELVILLE must be ranked among the American poets hereafter, we suppose, on account of his recent volume, *Battle Pieces and Aspects of the War*. It is many years since he has published anything, his last work, if we remember rightly, being a collection of tales which originally appeared in *Putnam's Monthly*, and were collected under the title of *Israel Potter*.

GENERAL BASIL DUKE, of the late Confederate army, is reported to be at work on a history of the life and military exploits of General John H. Morgan.

MRS. JEROME PATTERSON BONAPARTE, of Baltimore, who lately met with a severe accident, is writing her memoirs, which ought to make a very interesting volume.

MISS BRADDON'S projected magazine, *Belgravia*, is announced to appear in October. Its chief feature will be a novel from her pen entitled *Birds of Prey*. Among her contributors we find the names of Mr. Charles Reade, whose *Griffith Gaunt* must be drawing near its end; Mr. Winwood Reade, his nephew, the author of a very readable work on Africa; Mr. Walter Thornbury, the author of a *Life of Turner*, a volume of *Travels in Spain*, republished by the Harpers, *Shakespeare's England*, a volume of *Jacobite Ballads*, and other works; Mr. Percy Fitzgerald, novelist and biographer; Mr. Robert Buchanan, the young Scottish poet; Mr. Mortimer Collins, a brother of the Collins; and Mr. George Augustus Sala, who will continue his *Streets of the World*, a series of papers begun in *Temple Bar*. Among the probable contributors to *Belgravia* are Mr. Anthony Trollope and Mr. G. Whyte Melville, the author of *Cerise*, etc.

MISS ALICE CARY is publishing a serial story, entitled *The Bishop's Son*, in *The Springfield Republican*.

MR. JOHN ESTEN COOKE, of Virginia, proposes to publish a full and reliable record of the noble actions of southern women, their charities, self-sacrifices, and heroic courage and devotion during the trying scenes of the late war.

THE REV. DR. ELLIS, of Charlestown, is engaged in editing and annotating the earliest records of the Massachusetts Historical Society touching its origin and its founders. His work will make one or two volumes.

COL. GEORGE WARD NICHOLS, known by his *Story of the Great March*, is reported to have written a novel founded on his experience during the war.

MR. GEORGE BANCROFT, the historian, is about to publish the last volume of his *History of the United States*.

PROF. D. H. C. COFFIN, senior professor of the corps of

professors of mathematics, is about to take charge of *The Nautical Almanac*, the office of which is to be removed from Cambridge to Washington.

MR. ALBERT PIKE is announced as one of the editors of a projected magazine to be entitled *The Southern Mason*, and to be published at Natchez, Miss.

GENERAL WHEELER, of the late Confederate army, is writing a history of the operations of the cavalry force under his command during the war.

MR. EDMUND QUINCY is engaged upon a biography of his father, the late Josiah Quincy.

MR. J. WILLIAM JONES is said to be writing the religious history of the Army of Northern Virginia.

MR. J. S. C. ABBOTT is busy upon *The Lives of the American Presidents*.

DR. OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES is said to be writing a new story, though we do not credit the report. We know that he refused a large offer for a serial novel in the early part of the spring, expressing at the time his disinclination to write one.

THE Rev. William Stubbs is the successor of Mr. Goldwin Smith in the chair of modern history at the University of Oxford. He is known as the author of *Chronicles and Memorials of the Reign of Richard I.*; *Registrum Sacrum Anglicanum*; *Tractatus de Inventione S. Crucis*, and other works of a historical character.

THE late James Sheridan Knowles, the dramatist, has had a monument placed over his grave in the Glasgow Necropolis, by a number of his friends and pupils.

MISS CHRISTINA ROSSETTI lives in London, and is an intimate friend of her sister poetess, Miss Jean Ingelow. She is not young, as one might have inferred from her poetry, but is religious and charitable, living a quiet and reserved life.

BARON JAMES DE ROTHSCHILD has lately written a play called *Baron and Financier*, which is to be performed by amateur artists among his family and friends.

MISS HARRIET MARTINEAU, who is in very ill health, has ceased to write, save now and then a letter to a friend. *The Daily News* was the last journal in which she wrote.

M. GUIZOT has finished the seventh volume of his *Memoirs*, but it will not be published during the present year. The eighth volume, which is in progress, is not to see the light until after his death. His correspondence is said to be of the greatest interest, including, as it does, twelve hundred letters from Louis Philippe upon every event of importance between 1840 and 1848.

ANNOUNCEMENTS.

MESSRS. HARPER & BROTHERS announce a handsome library edition of *Felix Holt, the Radical*.

THE AMERICAN NEWS Co. will soon publish *Clemenceau*; or, *The Memoir of the Accused*, a translation of the younger Damas's last novel, *Affaire Clemenceau*.

MESSRS. JOHN WILEY & SON have in preparation *An Elementary Hebrew Grammar*, by Prof. W. H. Green, of Princeton; *Elementary Plane Problems*, by S. Edward Warren; and a new and revised edition, with additions, of *A Treatise on Astronomy*, by Prof. M. A. Norton, of Yale College.

MR. JAMES S. CLAXTON has in the press *The State of the Church and the World at the Final Outbreak of Evil and Revelation of Anti-Christ*; *His Destruction at the Second Coming of Christ*, and *The Ushering in of the Millennium*, by the Rev. I. T. Gregory, M.A., with an appendix by Mrs. A. G. Joliffe.

MESSRS. TICKNOR & FIELDS have in the press Mr. George S. Hillard's late oration before the Phi Beta Kappa Society of Amherst College.

We learn that the Rev. I. H. Ward has completed the oversight of the *Life and Letters of James Gates Percival* in its passage through the press, and that it will be published in a few weeks.

NOTES AND QUERIES.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ROUND TABLE:

DEAR SIR: The first paragraph in your paper concerning the authorship of *The Memoirs of the Confederate War for Independence*, published in *Blackwood*, contained much truth, although, as Mr. C. A. Bristed says, "Heros von Borcke is not a myth." He is a real character, a Prussian by birth, and upon his arrival in Paris, a few years ago, was indeed "a large, awkward, green, very green youth." He came to the Confederate States early in the war, and attracted considerable attention by his immense size and by his Munchausen tales. Representing himself as an officer in the Prussian army on leave of

absence, he got a commission in the cavalry, and was ordered on staff duty until he had mastered the language. Gen. J. E. B. Stuart grew very fond of him, and was inclined to favor him throughout the war, though it must be confessed that he saw some hot times. During Stuart's raid round McClellan's army Von Borcke rendered signal service in getting over some sixty or seventy stubborn horses who would not take the stream. A temporary bridge had been constructed, across which the men marched, drawing the artillery by hand. A bank some three feet high prevented the horses from entering the water, and here Von Borcke's immense size was of some avail. Ranging a horse alongside the bank, he would take a short run and strike the animal with his shoulder with full force. In every instance the horse went over as if struck by a cannon ball. When they arose from this forced plunge they generally started for the same shore, but Von Borcke would plunge into the stream and swim half-way across until the horse was started right, then return to repeat the operation. In this way he got upwards of sixty horses over the Chickahominy. When the war ended, Von Borcke, then suffering from a severe wound in the throat, went to London. Mr. John R. Thompson was then residing there, engaged in literary pursuits, and the two formed an agreement, for common profit, to write up Von Borcke's adventures in the war. The first eight or ten chapters of the work were written by Mr. Thompson, and very well written, too. The papers were highly spoken of in London and were extensively copied here. But Mr. Thompson declined to fill the papers with the consummate vanity which this doughty warrior tried to force upon him, and hence he quarreled with Mr. Thompson, withholding from him his fair share of the profits. A more pliant and less scrupulous writer was found to do the work—one who had no objection to telling how gallantly Heros von Borcke surrounded and captured whole regiments of Yankees without the aid of a single man. I need not add that the later chapters are so full of bravado, conceit, and exaggeration as to make them nauseating to the participants in the events he pretends to chronicle faithfully.

NEW ORLEANS, August 20, 1866.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ROUND TABLE:

DEAR SIR: I have just been reading some of the back numbers of your paper, and in one of them (No. 39, p. 341) you use these words: "an unique specimen," etc. Without wishing to appear presumptuous or hypercritical, I wish to inquire whether *an* is the proper form of article to be used in that connection. I do not select this example because I regard such a use of *an* as at all singular; for I am aware that similar examples abound in the works of some eminent authors. I select it merely for the purpose of calling attention to what appears to me to be a violation of one of our rules of grammar, with the hope of conducing to the establishment of a uniformity of usage in respect to the indefinite article. *A* and *an* are but different forms of the same article, the consonant *n* being used only for euphony. The question, therefore, that determines its use is, Where does euphony require it? Some will answer, before a vowel; but this, I think, is not strictly correct. It should be before a *vowel sound*. *Unique* is pronounced *yew-neck*, beginning with a consonant sound. Therefore, if it is correct to say "an unique specimen," it is also correct to say, *an yew tree*, *an youth*, *an union*, etc. No question can arise as to the use of the article with such words as *urn* and *umpire*, because not only do the written words begin with a *vowel*, but the spoken words begin with a *vowel sound*. Doubtless a misconception of the rule to which I have alluded has led to the irregularity that I have pointed out. Some may regard the matter as trivial; but I cannot regard anything as trivial that relates to the forms of words.

Yours truly, J. W. W.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Aug. 25, 1866.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ROUND TABLE:

DEAR SIR: I wish to ask two or three questions, and hope that you or some of your correspondents will answer them.

The British Quarterly in reviewing Præd's works quotes several pieces of great beauty and point, and selects the stanzas containing a graceful compliment to Campbell to show how poetical a charade can be. And the reviewer, after quoting the whole of the charade on Campbell, continues: "But the most epigrammatic and elegant of Præd's charades is one that we have not seen till published in the English edition of his poems:

"He who can make my first to roll

When not a breath is blowing,

May very slightly turn my whole

To set a mountain going.

"He who can curb my Lecona's will

When she's inclined for roving (or loving),

May turn my whole more slightly still

To cure the moon of moving."

This polished enigmatic gem may be left to any lady of the race of Ædipus who deigns to read our criticism. It shows that even so trivial a thing as a charade may be a work of art. I have failed to solve it.

Some three or four years ago I frequently saw in the papers the following:

"Come as the winds come when forests are rended,
Come as the waves come when navies are stranded."

Who is the author?

Where shall I find this old and oft-quoted line or part of a line:

"A mere looker-on in Vienna"?

T. —.

FLORENCE, ALA., August 30, 1866.

We should say the first of the two quotations might be found somewhere in the poetical works of Scott; the last

is in Shakespeare, but in what play we cannot at this moment say positively—though we think it is in *Two Gentlemen of Verona*.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ROUND TABLE:

The exclamation "Consistency, thou art a jewel!" has long been unaffiliated. Some forty or fifty years ago, Thomas Moore, who was then writing poetical squibs and satires for *The London Times*, began one with the couplet,

"Consistency, thou art a jewel!"

Was lately said by Sir John Sewell."

The person thus quoted from was an ecclesiastical or admiralty judge in the reigns of George III. and George IV., and appears to have introduced the fatherless sentence into one of his speeches about the time of Moore's alluding to it. Moore's poem is not included in the edition of his poems selected and supervised by himself (he omitted a great deal of his personal and political satire, thinking that it ought to perish with the occasion which produced it), but, if I remember rightly, will be found in the one-volume edition published in Paris by Galligani—an edition, by the way, of some interest to book collectors, as it contains without omission or alteration the whole of *Little's Poems*, very few of which, and those comparatively decent, are to be found in Moore's works edited by himself. R. S. M.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ROUND TABLE:

DEAR SIR: I am nowhere able to ascertain the author of the following lines:

"The winds are high on Helles' wave,
As on that night of stormy water
When Love, who sent, forgot to save
The youth, the beautiful and brave,
The lonely hope of Sestos' daughter."

By giving the desired information you will greatly oblige
Yours truly, W. W. T. B.

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind., August 23, 1866.

If the writer of this note will turn to his Byron, he will not have to read far in *The Bride of Abydos* before he will find the information he seeks.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ROUND TABLE:

DEAR SIR: Can you or any of your readers inform me, through the columns of your valuable paper, where the quotation,

"A fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind,"

can be found? Yours truly, PH. B. V.

PHILADELPHIA, August 27, 1866.

If not in Pope, in some of the writers of his period.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ROUND TABLE:

DEAR SIR: Can you or any of the readers of *The Round Table* inform me who is the author of a poem called, if I remember correctly, *The Skeleton Monk*. Also, where I could obtain a copy of it? Very truly yours, A. G.

NEW YORK, August 24, 1866.

We believe Mr. Francis De Haes Janvier published a volume of poems under that title a few years since at Philadelphia.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ROUND TABLE:

DEAR SIR: Will you please give the origin of the term "Jayhawker"? Why should it not have found a place in *Wheeler's Dictionary* as well as "Copperhead"? Can you give any account of the metal called "Tent-negue in the tariff"? Yours truly, E. P. G.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ROUND TABLE:

DEAR SIR: Can you supply title, authorship, or any information concerning the following verses, which I find in an old scrap-book? I. E. H.

"Ho, lassie o' the licht broun e'e,
Whase sparkles fash my throbbing heart,
I pray ye glint na sae at me,
I pray ye cease yere wilesome art!
I fain wad fain be left alone;
I fain wad gae anither way:
Bat whyles ye send sich blinks abune
I canna win mysel' awa."

"Ye winna! 'twere certes in vain,
For sin I see ye're skelpit too;
Tho' ye to hide it a' are fain,
And I—my bosom bleeds anoo.
For yon yung archer, blin', assent,
Whyles we were dallying here abelh,
His lightning shafts of luve has sent,
Till we baith wounded hearts manna dree."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ROUND TABLE:

DEAR SIR: In "Notes and Queries" of your issue for August 10, "W. R. W." asks for "information concerning a poem called *Avenia*." The only poem of that name of the existence of which I am aware is one written by Thomas Branagan, of whom I know nothing more than that he was the writer and compiler of several works of various kinds which seem to have passed into deserved oblivion. I have before me two books, both published in Philadelphia in 1810, on the title-pages of which his name appears as author. One of these is *Avenia*, an epic in five books, on the slave-trade, or what Branagan himself punningly calls, in the preface, "the *inhuman* commerce of the *human* species." In this preface, which, though a poor specimen of composition, is interesting on account of its singularity, he remarks: "On a subject of such importance, many authors, both in the old and new world, have written; several of whose performances are justly eulogized as works of sterling merit. But I must say few have had the opportunity of gaining the practical information on this subject which Providence has

put in my power; and none can be under more cogent obligations to expose the barbarities of my accomplices in tyranny than I undoubtedly am." Whence he derived this particular knowledge, and of what nature were these so "cogent obligations," he does not state.

He earnestly deprecates severe criticism, lays great stress on the merits of his subject, and acknowledges, on another occasion, that *Avenia* is the most imperfect as well as the first of his works. "The reader must remember," he says (though I do not see why the reader should be supposed to know), "that in the execution of the work I have labored under many formidable disadvantages and interruptions, resulting from domestic avocations, etc.; that part of the poem was written some years past, when I had little expectation of submitting it to the inspection of the public; and, in transcribing it for publication, I found it utterly impracticable to arrange it systematically." "Perspicuity instead of elegance, utility instead of method, the development of truth instead of the flowers of rhetoric, have been my primary objects in the prosecution of the work."

Certainly, in a poem prefaced with admissions of this sort, and others like them, no reader could reasonably expect anything extraordinary, except, perhaps, extraordinary dullness and insipidity. The epic itself I have not read, and heaven forbid me from ever being doomed to a thorough perusal of it, for it appears to be excessively tedious and soporific, and "very much like Jean Paul's grandfather—in the highest degree poor and pious."

In the publisher's address to the public on the occasion of the present edition of *Avenia*, "corrected and revised by a respectable physician of Philadelphia," I find the following amusing extract from the preface to the author's *Pleasures of Death*: "Although I have written much poetry, I absolutely disclaim the title of poet. Nature alone can make one. There are many who write verses in the commonwealth of literature, but few, very few of them, are poets. I remember when I was a novice at composition that I thought myself a considerable poet. And it was this vanity which induced me with the boldness to write my *Avenia*, a tragical poem in five books, in imitation of Homer's *Iliad*. And I now in the face of the world debit myself for all the inelegance of composition and doggerel versification in that work, and credit my master with all the beauties in it; and also in the *Penitential Tyrant*."

"There are many such boobies," he continues, "who, because they can write a few doggerel verses in a hymn or elegy, fancy themselves excellent proficient in the art, when in fact they are no more poets than kings."

There are several odd points about the title-page of this forgotten "work," and perhaps, for the gratification of "W. R. W.'s" curiosity, you will afford room for it. Here it is: "*Avenia*; or, a Tragical Poem on the Oppression of the Human Species, and Infringement on the Rights of Man. In Five Books. With Notes Explanatory and Miscellaneous. Written in Imitation of Homer's *Iliad*—a New Edition—to which is added the

Constitution of the State of Pennsylvania. By Thomas Branagan, author of 'Preliminary Essays,' 'Serious Remonstrance,' 'Penitential Tyrant,' etc., etc.

'Proud Nimrod first the bloody chase began,
A mighty hunter, and his prey was man.'

Pope.

Philadelphia: Printed and sold by J. Cline, 125 South Eleventh Street. 1810."

Besides the writings mentioned here, Branagan wrote *The Beauties of Philanthropy*, *The Flowers of Literature* (to which is added the *Constitution of the United States*), and *The Pleasures of Death*. You will perceive from this list that he was a somewhat voluminous writer, and one, you will be inclined to add, as unimportant and mediocre as he was voluminous. He may, possibly, have been of some service in his day and generation; but it is scarcely worth while now to devote even this much space to his memory. And, lest I should become more tedious than necessary, I conclude with extracting a few lines from the opening of *Avenia*, wherefrom, as from specimen bricks, "W. R. W." may form some idea of this entire epic edifice:

"Awake, my muse, the inharmonious strain!
I sing of arms on Afric's crimson'd plain:
Of war, 'gainst Afric's sons by Christians wag'd,
With all the accursed love of gold enrag'd.
What pen can half their villainies accord!
What tongue can count the slaughters of their sword!
Give me, my muse, thy melancholy bard,
Give me to paint their guilt and their reward!
But ere these deeds of carnage I rehearse,
Aid me to trace in less discordant verse
The native virtues of the sable train,
And grandeur of their own paternal plain:
Where, fraught with fragrance, crops luxuriant grow,
Where cornels blushing on the hawthorn glow;
Where with soft tendrils the rich clust'ring vine
Doth round its friend, the aged elm, entwine,
And tow'ring oaks their shadowy branches spread
O'er the fat herds that on their fruit are fed;
Where stately palm-trees form a cool retreat,
To screen the native from the sultry heat:
Where all the various tenants of the wood
Prowl on in safety, and enjoy their food,
Or satiate, by the limpid streams abide
And slumber, as the murmuring waters glide," etc.

I find the sentence a long one, and am obliged to break off thus abruptly. If you think the extract is rather "too much of a good thing," you are at liberty to abridge it; but, pray, bring in, if you can, those cornels that "blushing on the hawthorn glow." I need not say how inappropriate, in a description that is intended to be of African scenery, all these details are, with the single exception of the palm-trees. And so, "without more circumstance at all," I take my leave of Branagan, the "melancholy bard," his "inharmonious strain," and his "less discordant verse."

If "W. R. W.," after what I have said, should wish to

know more of *Avenia*, he must read the rest of it himself. A copy of the book he can obtain on application to Mr. Alford Hunter, antiquarian bookseller and dealer in curious literary wares, Washington, D. C.

I remain yours truly,

HANS SACHS.

GEORGETOWN, D. C.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ROUND TABLE:

DEAR SIR: *The (London) Spectator*, in a notice of Mr. William A. Wheeler's *Noted Names of Fiction*, erroneously attributed by a writer in your last number to his brother, Rev. Charles H. Wheeler, of Cambridge, takes exception to the statement that the frigate *Constitution*, "which did so much execution on English men-of-war in 1812, is still in the service," and adds, "We believe she was sold to the Brazilians about twenty years ago." This information is new to me, as I think it must be to most American readers. Neither, I think, can Mr. Wheeler's statement be relied upon as wholly accurate. The *Constitution* is, indeed, still in the service. Three years since it was used as a school-ship at the Newport Naval Academy, but a single plank, as I was informed when on board, was the sole link that connected her with the old frigate.

Probably some of your readers can furnish further information on this point, and confirm me in my skepticism as to the alleged sale to the Brazilian Government.

A.

THE ROUND TABLE.

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